VOL. CCXX, No. 2875
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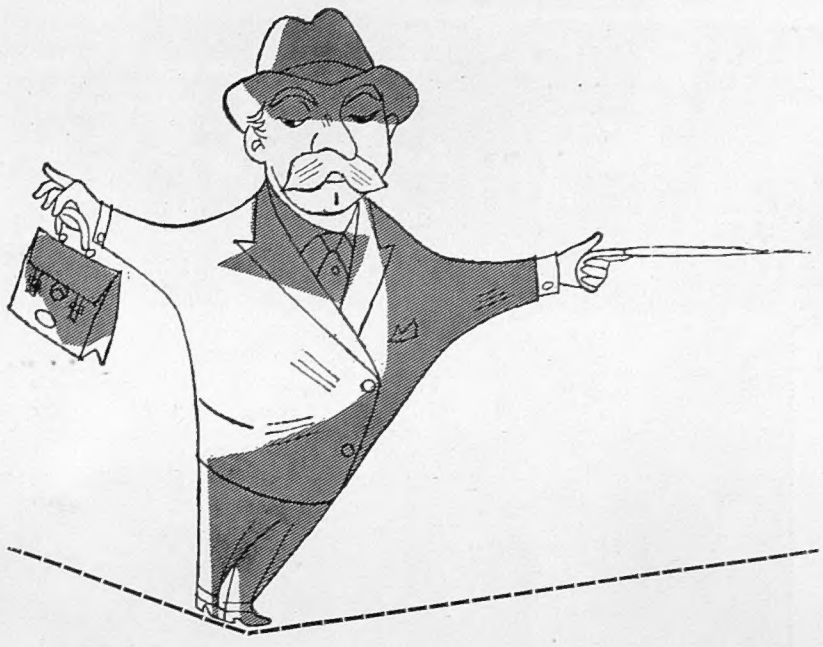

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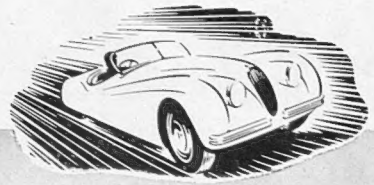

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Volume CCXX No. 2875 The SPHERE, London, March 19, 1955

The SPHERE
with which is incorporated THE GRAPHIC

BALING OUT SUCCESSFULLY AT ZERO FEET — A DUMMY PILOT STRAPPED TO A NEW TYPE OF EJECTION SEAT IS SHOT FROM A METEOR FIGHTER TRAVELLING AT OVER 100 M.P.H. : The special parachutes were fully open before the dummy was 20 ft. from the ground and experts are confident that a human pilot would have escaped unharmed. This new seat has been designed by Martin-Baker, and weighs only 66 lb., which is a third lighter than the standard model.

The trial of the new-type ejection seat, in which a dummy was used for safety, was made by Squadron-Leader Fifield, a Martin-Baker test pilot, at Chalgrove Airfield, in Oxfordshire. The seat was installed in the rear crew position of a Meteor jet plane, and Squadron-Leader Fifield began a take-off run. At a speed of 115 m.p.h. the ejection cartridge was fired. Observers saw the smallest of the three parachutes appear as the cartridge was fired, the seat fall away, and the dummy descend slowly below the parachutes, which were fully open at a height of 20 ft. By the time the dummy had landed, the Meteor had taken off. The secret of this new seat is contained in two of its features : the special Irving parachute, which is designed to open quickly, and the telescopic mounting of the seat itself, which will enable the pilot to be shot about 75 ft. above the aircraft he leaves. These successful trials hint that the dream of pilots is coming true. Since the parachute was first used, its great drawback has been that the pilot must be at a considerable height above the ground if he is to bale out successfully. Pilots engaged in low-level bombing attacks will benefit especially when the new seat comes into service. The number of fatalities through landing and take-off accidents should also be lessened.

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MRS. ROOSEVELT AT LONDON RECEPTION

THE WIDOW OF THE LATE PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT ATTENDS A DIPLOMATIC RECEPTION AT THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR'S NEW RESIDENCE IN REGENT'S PARK: Mrs. Roosevelt is seen with the Ambassador and Mrs. Winthrop Aldrich at Winfield House, during her stay in London before going on to Israel. Mr. and Mrs. Aldrich met their guests, who included diplomats from many countries, in five reception rooms. Winfield House was given by Barbara Hutton for the use of the American Ambassador in London.

MR. ATTLEE MEETS THE AMERICANS AT WINFIELD HOUSE: He is seen with Mr. Bradley Connors (centre), the U.S. Embassy's Councillor for Public Affairs, and General Ralph Glasgow, the U.S. Military Attaché in London.

BRAVERY AWARDS FOR LIFEBOATMEN

THE DUCHESS OF KENT MAKES SEVERAL PRESENTATIONS AT THE CENTRAL HALL, WESTMINSTER: Coxswain William W. Williams, of St. David's, Pembrokeshire, lifeboat, receives the Silver Medal of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, for the rescue of thirty-five members of the crew of the tanker *World Concord*. The presentation took place during the Annual General Meeting of the R.N.L.I., of which the Duchess is President. Altogether fourteen men, including members of the United States Air Force, received awards and honours. The Americans had taken part in the rescue of the sole survivor from the South Goodwin lightship.

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A London Newsletter

195–198, STRAND, W.C.2.

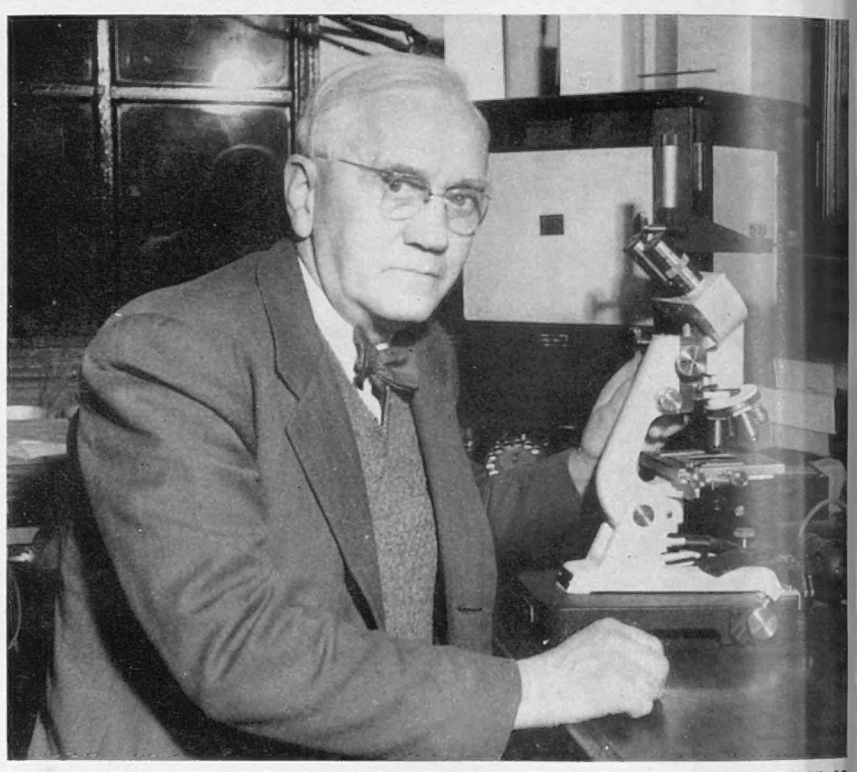
Statesmen's Flying Time.—A day may come when biographers will sum up the merits of their subjects, premiers and foreign ministers, and such, not so much on the basis of what they achieved in diplomacy and in world harmony, as in the number of hours flown on their missions. It is certainly true of American statesmen that their offices are as much airborne as ground-based, and it may almost be said of Sir Anthony and our Foreign Office. No doubt, the world to-day is a small place, and no doubt at all a *viva voce* exchange of views is better than an exchange of a dozen letters, but it seems a pity that English and American statesmen do not stagger their flying hours when they fly off to the same area of trouble. For sometimes it will happen that the arguments of one cancel out the arguments of the other, to the confusion of those on the spot, and that their reports of "business done" made to their home Government and Parliament stress such very contradictory successes that their own people are worse confounded. The latest flights of Mr. Dulles and Sir Anthony are a case in point. Both, of course, brought back bunches of grapes and showed them to the waiting reporters and Parliaments as reasonably large and sweet, but quite clearly the grapes were not cut from the same vine. The puzzled publics may well have wondered whether the price of good hopes of settlement was not a further rift in the "mutual understanding and co-operation between the great English-speaking communities," so essential to world peace and to the orators of the Pilgrims' dinners. But perhaps all grapes are good when the returning planes touch down.

Eye-less in Gaza.—The Gaza incident has still, at the time of writing, to be examined for a final verdict. In the Security Council the British delegate gave his view that the primary evidence pointed to deliberate aggression by Israeli forces, but he spoke before the evidence of the Mixed Armistice Commission and of the Truce Commission had been heard. But at that stage the Security Council called for an abandonment of force on both sides—a pronouncement morally unexceptionable, if of doubtful efficacy. The U.N. has the supervision in that troubled area over a mass of refugees. All the border is a smouldering fire, too often fanned to flame by national fury, on one side or the other, about hostile actions by one side or the other against its nationals. In such an area, the policy of eye for eye, tooth for tooth, will not do. That policy has been superseded—for 2,000 years among Christians—though too often (and especially lately) more honoured in the breach. It is a question of discipline and Government authority. A strong Government and a disciplined Army can usually restrict, if not eliminate, such risks. The dangers on that border, it is fair to say, have come and may still come from either side. It was not so long ago that the Egyptian Government was powerless (or, worse still, did not use its power) to control such "incidents" in the Canal Zone, which, at that time, suited its policy well enough. Colonel Nasser's Government has already been praised for commendable restraint over the Gaza incident. But he is heir to the recent actions of his predecessor Governments and hardly yet in a position to speak of civilisation against barbarism, and discipline against indiscipline, in an area where memory of wrongs done is not short-lived.

No Victimisation.—The Tory optimists who like to cry "We split! We split!" over the crew of the Opposition ship breaking up on the rocks of Prospero's prosperous island, last week prophesied the expulsion of Mr. Bevan for his action in embarrassing Mr. Attlee in the House with an awkward question, better asked in private. It was an awkward question, no doubt, though the argument that Mr. Attlee could only answer it when he is back at No. 10 seems to make the value of Opposition policy and criticism look rather more foolish than it need do. For my part, if I had to "advise," I should incline to the view that *no victimisation* should be the Party decision. "No victimisation" is a popular policy and expedient to save further trouble and sabotage. All Governments use it, being short-sighted and already full of troubles. Mr. Bevan may to-day plough a lonely furrow; if he does, it is less the result of a one-man policy than of one man's vanity, impulsiveness and bad manners; but make him a martyr and the Party will make a score of martyrs who will follow Bevan into the wilderness to think out further mischief. Moreover, a General Election may come when it suits the other side, and not only is Bevan a good election platform, but a party split is a bad election chance. The Shadow Cabinet, at the time of writing, was stiffening up, and the pundits expected a withdrawal of the whip. But it still seemed possible that Mr. Bevan might get off with a caution and that tactfully drafted. Socialist voters are not always right. A great number of them are *left*. And the party needs, at a General Election, every vote it can catch. The allotment of offices can be made after victory and at No. 10.

Strange Contrasts.—Since 1939 average weekly earnings of most wage-earners have risen by 223 per cent. The average earnings to-day exceed £500 per annum. That is remarkable and, perhaps, keeps pace with the rise in costs of the things the earner *must* buy or regard as reasonable for his state. During those fifteen years the Civil Service weekly earnings in certain grades have risen by 65 per cent. This gives the Civil Service an opportunity to point out a strange contrast. I was reflecting whether in any other callings the contrast might appear even more "strange" than in the Civil Service, that numerous and important group of wage-earners. I came to the conclusion that it might. I believe I could catalogue some individual cases in certain callings where the rise in earnings is not even 65 per cent., but 0 per cent. You ask me where I shall find such cases? I should not have to search very deeply to find my cases, perhaps among private gardeners, artists of various kinds, writers in certain categories, many journalists, self-employed typists (1s. 6d. per thousand words—how is it done?), and so on. Indeed, without straining, I could a tale unfold whose lightest word would harrow up your soul. . . . Is it possible that the clamour for higher wages is heard more persuasively from the quarters held to be most essential for the national economy than from such "luxury" callings as spade-wielding in private gardens, or pen or brush pushing, or the preparation of manuscripts of a recreational kind? It is.

THE DEATH OF SIR ALEXANDER FLEMING



THE DISCOVERER OF PENICILLIN, WHO DIED IN LONDON LAST WEEK AT THE AGE OF SEVENTY-THREE: Sir Alexander Fleming made his great discovery of Penicillin during 1928-29, when he was engaged in bacteriological researches at St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington. His interest was first aroused by the accidental contamination by mould of a culture plate of bacteria. After his experiments some years were to pass before Penicillin was established as a life-saving drug. Research work was carried out at Oxford and later in America, and Sir Alexander was assisted in his experiments by Sir Howard Florey and Dr. E. B. Chain. Although Sir Alexander Fleming received many honours (he was knighted in 1944 and shared the 1945 Nobel Prize for Medicine with Florey and Chain), he never sought financial gain from his discovery.

French Academy.—The French Academy—the immortals—has filled up its vacancies by election and M. Cocteau is admitted *inter alios*. Perhaps it is a good thing we in England have no such body of immortals. If we started one, which is unlikely (for we are not much given to valuable prizes and distinctions for authors), we should presumably follow the French pattern. Authority would decree the Academy and presumably (with expert assistance) create a nucleus of immortals to form the electoral body for future selections. It would be well that the date of

ation of the body should coincide with a "good" riod in native literature. It might well have been iated in the palmy days of Victorian literature. t so easy to-day, when every writer who sells in a way is a "genius" and immortal, according to his blisher and the critics and readers who follow the ad and accept the blurb. It would even continue be difficult to recruit the immortals after the ardous first fence—the choice of names to form the ire Electoral College—had been jumped. For rature to-day is a mortal struggle to climb a ladder l there is a deal of envy, hatred and jostling during climb. And immortality is a posthumous label, posthumous. It is filled in by posterity's reading blic, not by contemporary decisions, and it is arkable how many "immortals" even in France re shared the fate of hacks, in posterity. Still, en the authorities in Britain ask for names to set ball a-rolling, I will offer them half a dozen.

A Liberal Solution.—Supporters of the eral Party plan to achieve a double-barrelled ective: to raise a fund to help Liberal constituency rties and Liberal causes, and to settle once and for the question of the exact ranking of a selected en "greatest living men." The latter is a very ed question. Some say it must be settled post-mously, by posterity a century hence. They argue at contemporary ranking often owes too much to trumpet of publicity, and that the worth of a ous man is not definitively established until the oes of those trumpets have died away. It may be ; it is a subject which interests me. But the Liberal anisers are going to have a stab at settling the blem here and now, and Lady Violet Bonham rter and four other wizards will judge the ranking thout prejudice. (How lucky for Lloyd George that cannot be on this list. "There 's much to be said being dead.") Still, there 's bound to be a good eral on it. The competition is said to be on the ht side of the law on gambling (such as it is). unsel's opinion has been taken and a liberal interpre-tion has been given, and in the next few weeks the inion of a million 1s. ticket-holders will do the job posterity and the encyclopædias and centenary-mpilers. Among the candidates for seeding are urchill (of course), Eisenhower, Einstein and lbert Schweitzer. The list is, I suppose, deficient in women ndidates. These four names make news and must least ensure that no one dare sing of the Liberal "They 'll none of them be missed." I have my lling ready. I mean to get my new car free, or at st a carefree Continental holiday. I am already sured of a good start.

A Cure for the Blues.—The University hts are now on the tideway. At this time of year 's always a regret to me when I drive to London t nearly all the London river bridges afford to sing motorists no view of what is going on below. e parapets are high and opaque. For the sight of University boat-crews in training is one to comfort, me and stimulate drybobs and other old sticks who ve been moping and shivering for weeks on end. l all this time these few, these happy few, have n facing the icy blasts and the icy spray on Isis and m and what-not, training themselves to win a crown laurels at the risk of a dicky heart, lightly clad and sterely nourished. For my part, I would almost fer the idea of joining the new Antarctica expedition the Himalayan, with all the latest scientific devices calorific. But the Boat Race is a hoary fixture test of endurance which still wins recruits among robust, and as long as the old Universities can find m twenty among the undergraduates to face the ining and the test at this season of the year, so g is the cry of "decadent youth" ridiculous, or, any rate, conditioned.

Rush-hour Congestion.—A start may n be made to lessen the London rush-hour conges-n. The experiment would begin in the Whitehall ices, and afterwards Oxford Street and Holborn uld be tackled. I suppose it is a complicated and ficult problem among Civil Servants and shops and siness premises. Yet a little more duplication in s, a little less specialisation, and surely the plan uld work in shops and offices alike. There is a irt to "setting the people free" and it is surely ched when the misery of millions is the price of it. e Government cannot for years to come, with the t will in the world and money to burn, hope to ieve the congestion of London rush-hour traffic; refore, to help the toiling millions, it should with-t delay reimpose some measure of control over ps and offices in the hours of staff arrivals and partures. London Transport might also stand to n financially by spreading the load. The unlucky s of the queues nowadays are forced to take to their t and so custom is lost. THE OLD STAGER

IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

MILLIONS for MOTORS

"The Sphere" Motoring Correspondent Describes the Great Expansion Programmes of Leading Firms in Britain's Motor Industry

Illustrated with Photographs and Special Drawings by VICTOR COVERLEY-PRICE

A FASHION SHOW IS HELD AT ARUNDEL CASTLE, IN SUSSEX

THE BANQUETING HALL OF THE ANCESTRAL HOME OF THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF NORFOLK BECOMES A FASHION SALON: A general view of the crowded hall during the fashion show which was held at the castle last week in aid of the Crippled Children of West Sussex. Some of those present watched the show from the gallery. Visitors from several parts of the country attended the show, many of them arriving by cars (which were parked in the castle's precincts) long before the first fashion parade was due to start. Price of admission was 10s. 6d. The mannequins, who dressed in the Marshal's suite, displayed some of the latest fashions from a canopied platform.

WORK GOES AHEAD ON EDINBURGH'S NEW NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND

On left—

THE FRONT VIEW OF THE NEW BUILDING OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND ON EDINBURGH'S GEORGE IV BRIDGE: Progress on the building in 1954 was more marked than in any previous year. It is hoped that the Ministry of Works will hand over the library in October. The exterior is almost complete, while inside the plasterwork of the walls and ceilings is well advanced. Earlier this year it was stated that this work had begun to reveal the true proportions of the principal public rooms—the exhibition rooms and boardroom on the ground-floor from which the main staircase leads to the catalogue hall and large reading room. Speaking at a meeting of the board of trustees in January, the Earl of Crawford said that they were moving into a building equipped with some of the latest methods of heating and lighting and book-storage. There would appear to be no end to the ways in which science might help librarianship.

THE DUKE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

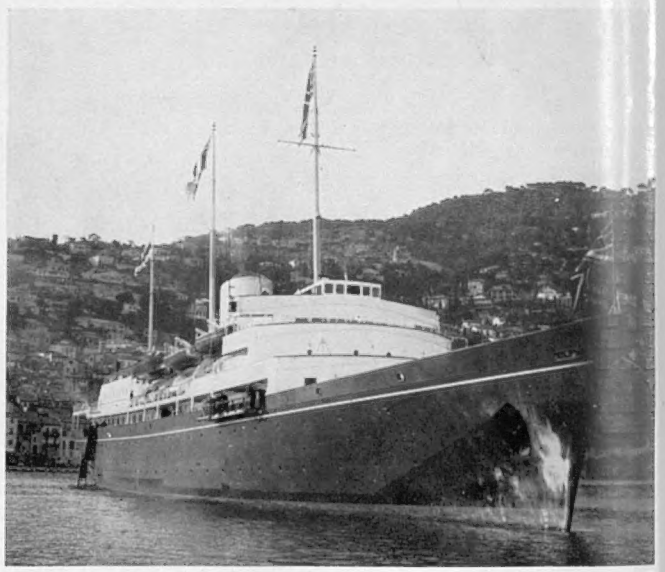
He Sails in the Royal Yacht to Join the Combined Fleets Exercise and then Visit Malta

The big Combined Exercise of the Home and Mediterranean Fleets in the Mediterranean this year had the name of "Sea Lance." The last stage, in which the Royal Navy had to meet a mock atomic attack, was watched by the Duke of Edinburgh from the Royal yacht *Britannia*.

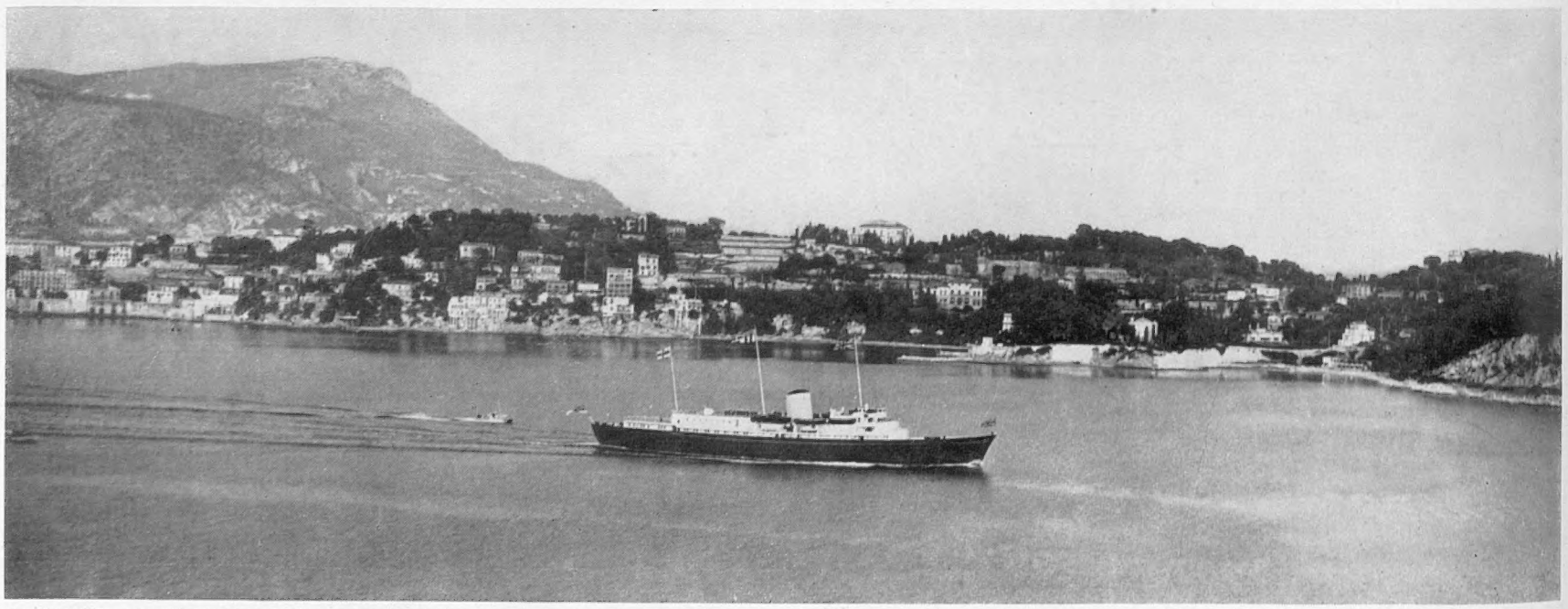
The Duke was cheered by thousands of onlookers when he embarked in the *Britannia* at Villefranche, on the French Riviera. He had been spending a few days at the home of his aunt, Nada, Marchioness of Milford Haven, at Le Cannet. Cannes. On joining the fleets, the Royal yacht not only acted as the Duke's observation post. She herself took part in one phase, in the role of a hospital ship. This was during what has been described as the Royal Navy's most important trial of defence against atomic attack to date. In choppy seas, *Britannia* fired orange smoke, indicating anti-aircraft fire, when under mock attack by fighters. The Exercise concluded with the Royal yacht leading the fleets into Malta harbour.

Senior officers and their staffs started immediately to assess the results of "Sea Lance," while crews competed in inter-fleet and inter-ship sporting contests. The Duke had many engagements with the three fighting Services, including inspections of Army, Royal Marine and Royal Air Force units ashore. He was also to attend a film premiere in aid of the Malta Playing Fields Association.

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH EMBARKS IN THE ROYAL YACHT: As he goes aboard *Britannia* at Villefranche he waves to the crowd on shore. After the Combined Fleets Exercise in the Mediterranean, the Duke had a busy programme in Malta.



THE DUKE'S DEPARTURE IS WATCHED BY THOUSANDS: *Above*—The *Britannia* is ready to sail from Villefranche. In the Combined Exercise she acted as a hospital ship. *On left*—Some of the thousands who cheered the Duke from Villefranche.



"DELIGHTED TO BE BACK AMONGST OLD FRIENDS": The *Britannia* moves out from the French coast. When she met the fleets, the Duke sent a signal: "Delighted to be back again and amongst so many old friends." It was the first time the Royal yacht had taken part in these annual naval exercises. On board with the Duke were the First Lord, Mr. J. P. L. Thomas, and the First Sea Lord, Sir Rhoderick McGrigor. At the end of the Exercise *Britannia* led the fleets into Malta.

A FAREWELL DISPLAY FOR THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL : A view of the Khalifa Square, in Omdurman, with the tomb of the Mahdi glistening in the background. Sir Robert and Lady Howe watched a display given by the three Town Councils of Omdurman, Khartoum and Khartoum North, to mark his retirement. The display included a programme of Sudanese songs and a demonstration of tribal dancing.

SIR ROBERT HOWE LEAVES THE SUDAN

Impressive Ceremonies Marked the Departure of the Governor-General, who has Retired After Seven Turbulent Years in His Appointment at Khartoum

Sir Robert Howe, who is sixty-one, announced at the end of last year that he wished to retire for personal reasons. He had been Governor-General of the Sudan since 1947, and his period of office coincided with the granting of self-determination to the Sudan, under the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1953, the first Sudanese General Election, and the installation of the Sudan's first Prime Minister and comprehensive Government. The process of Sudanisation is now entering its first year. During this time Sir Robert Howe has earned the greatest respect of Sudanese leaders, as the demonstrations at his departure showed. He will be succeeded as Governor-General by Sir Knox Helm.

A FINAL HANDSHAKE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER : Sir Robert Howe says good-bye to the Sudanese Premier, Sayed Ismail el Azhari, before leaving Khartoum with Lady Howe for Port Sudan on the first stage of his journey to England.

THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S LAST INSPECTION : Sir Robert Howe, accompanied by Major F. Montague Jones, inspecting a guard of honour from the 1st Battalion The Royal Fusiliers, at Khartoum Railway Station. Detachments from the Royal Air Force, the Camel Corps, Egyptian Army and the Sudan Camel Mounted Police also took part in the leave-taking ceremonies.

A MAGNIFICENT PARTING PRESENT FROM THE THREE TOWN COUNCILS : Sir Robert Howe and the Sudanese Premier admiring the gift made to the Governor-General by the Councils of Omdurman, Khartoum and Khartoum North on his retirement. It consisted of a silver tray decorated with the badges of the nine provinces of the Sudan, and one large and twelve smaller finger-bowls. All are the work of the renowned silversmiths of Omdurman.

ADMIRAL STUMP ON MATSU ISLAND

THE AMERICAN NAVAL CHIEF IN THE PACIFIC TOURS A CHINESE NATIONALIST STRONG-POINT: Admiral Felix Stump, who is in command of the U.S. Naval Forces in the Pacific, returns the salute of a Chinese Nationalist soldier on Matsu Island, off the coast of China. Behind him are senior officers of General Chiang Kai-shek's army. *On right*—Admiral Stump talks with a Nationalist officer, while a member of the crew of an anti-aircraft gun remains at his post. The soldier is watching a possible invasion route by the Chinese Communist forces. The position of the smaller coastal islands off the Chinese shore, of which Matsu is one, remains ambiguous. Strategically, they could be stepping-stones from the mainland for the Communists to attack Formosa, which the U.S. has decided to defend. No guarantee has been given for other islands, except the Pescadores. But, according to current reports, the Nationalists are reinforcing Matsu. Last week Sir Anthony Eden told Parliament the U.K. Government would like the Nationalists to withdraw from Matsu.

ALL SAINTS CATHEDRAL, IN NAIROBI, IN WHICH A MAU MAU RAID WAS SUSPECTED: Intruders broke in at night and held a pagan ceremony in front of the altar of the children's corner. It is believed they may have been Mau Mau, who "anointed" one of their number as leader. As a result of this act of desecration, a reconsecration service was held.

THE DESECRATION OF NAIROBI CATHEDRAL

THE POLICE INVESTIGATE: Detectives look for finger-prints on the Cathedral's Book of Remembrance, which had been tampered with by the intruders. On the left is the Provost, the Very Rev. H. A. Evan Hopkins. None of the valuable silver ornaments in the Cathedral seem to have been touched.

The reasons for the desecration of All Saints Cathedral, in Nairobi, are not entirely clear. It was forcibly entered at night, and it seems possible that a blasphemous ceremony was held in the children's corner] by Mau Mau terrorists. Loyal Africans expressed the opinion that the Mau Mau "anointed" a new leader. They based this view on the evidence of five chairs placed round the altar and the fact that vestments were stolen. The leader would have been "anointed" with water from the font behind the chairs. Since there was no damage and no valuable ornaments were stolen, another possible explanation is that the terrorists were attempting to placate the "God of the Europeans," who is bringing retribution to the Mau Mau. After a careful investigation, the police could throw little light on these peculiar circumstances and refrained from committing themselves to an opinion.

However, the Bishop of Mombasa, the Rt. Rev. Leonard Beecher, after consultations with the Provost of the Cathedral, the Very Rev. H. A. Evan Hopkins, decided that a reconsecration ceremony was necessary. He said: "We feel that while we are ignorant of what happened inside the Cathedral, we are pretty sure that it was not of a Christian nature. That in itself implies an act of desecration." The reconsecration service was solemnly held in his presence a day later. The provost led a procession of worshippers carrying bibles and candles round the Cathedral.

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL AT THE ZOO

THE PRIME MINISTER WITH SOME OF HIS WILD ANIMAL PETS: Sir Winston Churchill paid a visit to the Zoological Gardens in Regent's Park last week-end. *On the left* he is seen in the Lion House, where he spent an hour, proffering a chicken to his lion Rota. Rota is recovering from a serious illness. In 1943 he was given to Sir Winston, who presented him to the Zoo. In the *right-hand picture* the Prime Minister puts his hand through the bars of the cage to pat another of his pets, his baby leopard Sheba.

AN INTRICATE EXERCISE IN NAVIGATION: From the bridge of the United States Navy ice-breaker *Atka*, officers watch a helicopter in the distance taking an observer to an Antarctic ice-cap. There it was possible to determine the expedition's exact location: it was 686 miles from the South Pole.

THE UNITED STATES NAVY ICE-BREAKER ON HER EXPLORATORY EXPEDITION: The *Atka* is moored fast to ice in the Admiral Byrd Bay, which was discovered by the American naval expedition to the Antarctic. The bay was one of two good sites discovered by the expedition, which will serve as bases for the larger expedition planned for next year.

AFTER TWENTY-ONE YEARS ON LITTLE AMERICA: Amory H. Waite, a Signal Corps observer aboard the *Atka*, holds part of a wind-generator which he mounted on top of the radio tower during the Byrd expedition of 1934. Left centre is all that can now be seen above the snow and ice of the 70-ft. radio mast.

THE U.S. NAVY IN THE ANTARCTIC

The Ice-breaker "Atka" has Returned from a Two-months Exploratory Survey as Preparation for a Larger American Expedition Next Year

The United States Navy ice-breaker *Atka* is now on her way to Boston after completing a two-months survey of the Antarctic in preparation for a big American expedition, which will make a start next year. The *Atka* sailed from Wellington, New Zealand, and during her journey explored nearly half the coastline of the Antarctic in the search for bases for future exploration and research. During this time the naval ice-cutter reached a position 686 miles from the South Pole—further south than any point previously reached by an American ship, and only six miles away from the record achieved by Amundsen's expedition in 1911.

Starting at the Little Americas, established by Admiral Byrd before the last war, the *Atka* made her way round the Antarctic Circle to the Atlantic side of the continent. During this journey the expedition sailed over what had hitherto been charted as land or ice-shelf. Evidently that shelf had now broken off. At various points the vessel made unsuccessful attempts to breach the ice-pack round the coast, and it was not until the Atlantic coast was reached that the expedition met with its greatest rewards. Here were discovered two bays which were named Atka and Admiral Byrd, and which proved to be well sited as bases for forthcoming operations. The ice in these bays is 20 ft. thick, and makes an ideal dock for larger ships.

Next year will see the beginning of exploration which the United States authorities are undertaking with the object of establishing an observation post on the South Pole itself. This is America's contribution to the International Geophysical Year 1957-58. As has already been reported, Britain intends to send an expedition across the continent over land. The Argentine has already established new bases in the Weddell Sea.

THE PHLEGMATIC SEAL: The animals loll about on the Antarctic ice, not in the least interested in the scientific achievements going on around them. Two experts are using an inductor, which locates the earth's magnetic field.

DIGGING FOR REMAINS IN THE ANTARCTIC: Two scientists of the U.S. Naval Expedition to the Antarctic prepare for density tests on the site of Admiral Byrd's 1939 camp, Little America III. Beneath them, buried in ice and snow, was a 15-ft. Quonset hut.

THE RUGGED GRANDEUR OF WESTERN CANADA WHICH MAY HOLD HIDDEN WEALTH : The party of oil prospectors are dwarfed by the peaks of the Rocky Mountains. The search for oil in this area has been undertaken by the D'Arcy Exploration Company, the prospecting organisation of the British Petroleum Company.

Oil in Canada

A Party of Prospectors Surveys the Rocky Mountains in a Search for Oil for the British Petroleum Company

The search for oil, source of so much modern wealth and power, never ceases. For instance, the D'Arcy Exploration Company, the prospecting organisation of the British Petroleum Company, has survey parties engaged in such various and widely separate areas as Papua, Zanzibar, Sicily and the Midland counties of England. Even the seas can yield oil, and surveyors of this company are working in the off-shore waters of the Persian Gulf.

Now British Petroleum has added another country to the list of likely suppliers of its livelihood. This is Canada. Eighteen months ago the D'Arcy Company acquired a substantial interest in the Triad Oil Company, of Calgary, in Alberta. Triad owns interests in oil properties in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. D'Arcy sent parties to survey for oil in Central and Western Canada.

The pictures on this page show one of these parties at work. Its area of prospecting was in the Rocky Mountains. On horse and by foot they went through rugged natural grandeur to look for oil. The team consisted of Mr. S. B. Sykes, a geologist of the D'Arcy Exploration Company, Mr. Mike Hviskevich, a Canadian geologist, and Mr. Chet Barnes, also a Canadian, who acted as their assistant. The work was exacting and often exhausting. On mountain-ridges rock had to be chipped and minutely scrutinised. Snow sometimes stopped the investigations. The party has followed the usual practice of oil survey teams. After several months in the field, they have returned to headquarters. There all the results of their finds must be collated and decisions reached as to the areas most likely to give the best yields of oil.

THE SEARCH FOR OIL : *On left*—Mike Hviskevich, a Canadian geologist, examines minutely a piece of rock. *On right*—S. B. Sykes, the D'Arcy Company's geologist, chips off rock samples.

MOUNTAIN-CLIMBING IS PART OF THE PROSPECTORS' TASK : Mr. Sykes, the leader of the prospecting party in Canada, makes his way along a snow-covered ridge. After several months spent working in the field, the prospectors have to collate the results of their search for oil at headquarters.

THE TIBETAN NEW YEAR IS CELEBRATED IN PEKING : The focus of attention at a banquet held in the Chinese capital last month. From left are Mr. Chou En-lai, Communist China's Prime Minister ; the Panchen Lama, Panchen Ngoerhtehni ; Mr. Mao Tse-tung, the Chinese President ; the Dalai Lama of Tibet ; and Mr. Liu Chao-chi, the formulator of Party policy.

BUDDHIST PRIESTS JOIN IN COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA : Priests of a Buddhist temple in Peking sign a petition which calls for the outlawing of the atom bomb "for the sake of Buddha."

THROUGH EASTERN WINDOWS

The Dalai Lama is Feted in Peking; The Enthronement of the New King of Cambodia at Pnom Penh

In November 1951, just a year after his country had been seized by Chinese Communist forces, the Dalai Lama of Tibet was elected a member of the National Committee of the Central People's Government Council, of which Mao Tse-tung is Chairman. Since then the fourteenth Dalai Lama, now twenty years old, has been feted in Peking and displayed with evident pride as one of the leading figures in the Communist hierarchy. He is always to be seen in the company of Panchen Ngoerhtehni, known as the Panchen Lama. Both the Dalai and the Panchen Lamas are regarded as reincarnations of the Buddha. But whereas the Dalai Lama wielded secular and administrative, as well as spiritual authority in Tibet, the Panchen Lama's power was spiritual only. In fact, Tibet had been without a resident Panchen Lama since 1923, when the holder of that office fled to China, after a dispute with the Dalai Lama. He died in 1937. The present Panchen Lama is one of three claimants to the office who were brought up in China. The Communist Government's interest in these Buddhist religious leaders is not solely due to its desire to placate Tibet. It is understood that both have a considerable following in various parts of China, including the vast province of Sikang. It is interesting to note that an absentee from the recent Peking celebrations of the Tibetan New Year was General Chu Teh, the Vice-President and second only to Mao. The General is also Commander-in-Chief of the Chinese People's Army, and it may well be that pressure of business in other parts of China accounts for his absence from the capital.

THE NEW KING OF CAMBODIA ENTHRONED : King Norodom Suramarit and Queen Sisowath Kossouan Nearyreak during the enthronement ceremony at Pnom Penh. *On left*—Braman priests kneel before the throne as they pay homage to the Royal couple during the ceremony. When King Norodom Sihanouk absented himself from his capital in 1953 as a protest against French delay in granting independence to his country, the affairs of State were presided over by his father, Prince Suramarit. But the young king was only away for a few days, and in spectacular fashion the French acceded to most of his requests. When King Sihanouk abdicated at the beginning of this month no interval was left for reflection. Within twenty-four hours he had nominated his sixty-year-old father to succeed him, and Prince Suramarit was enthroned King of Cambodia with all due ceremony at Pnom Penh.

A FACTORY IN THE MIDST OF THE CROFTING COUNTRY OF WESTER ROSS: In the asbestos, prefabricated building at the right is housed the small tractor-assembly factory at Inverasdale, to the north of Oban, on the west coast of Scotland. In the distance can be seen Loch Ewe and Cove Point. Here, in the midst of lonely crofting country, is located one of a number of small industrial projects started in the Highlands. These undertakings aim to bring to a halt the drift away from the crofts.

A NEW DEAL FOR THE HIGHLANDS

The Newly Established Industries in Wester Ross and Argyllshire Set the Pattern for an Effective Way of Stopping the Drift from the Crofting Communities of Scotland

By PAT GARROW

HOPE is returning to the Highlands of Scotland and, in particular, to the crofting areas. There is a long way to go yet before the strain can be taken off the rope in this tug-of-war with destiny that has been going on for 250 years. For the moment, however, the pull is not all one way—away from the lands which saw some of Scotland's most romantic history.

Crofts are like smallholdings, about 5 to 10 acres mostly, with the addition of outrun or rough grazing for cattle or sheep, usually sheep these days. The crofter, to live, requires to supplement what he takes out of the ground. Those who live by the sea do this by fishing. Others weave tweed, or knit, or are employed seasonally, particularly when the tourist traffic is on. A very few work in new light industries.

It is a tragedy that the Highlands and islands of Scotland should have been neglected so wilfully over the years. Experts forecast that many crofting townships are in such an advanced state of decay that they will be dead in twenty years. Fortunately, a practical approach to the crofting problem is now being adopted by enterprising individuals and followed by official action. Parliament is backing an Act authorising a Crofters' Commission which will probably spend £200,000 in its first year. Not a lot, say the Highlanders, but at least it is a beginning. Then the power brought to the remoter districts through the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board; the plans of the Forestry Commission; and the establishment of the Highland Fund, with Lord Malcolm Douglas-Hamilton at the head, have given the crofter encouragement to stay put.

Still, the crofter cannot wait for elaborate plans and long-term policies to come to fruition. He has got to live in a countryside, in the meantime, that is, in some places, already hard pressed. It has been stated, for instance, that in the county of Sutherland, it would mean another 2d. in the £1 on the rates to employ an additional roadman.

Therefore, it is to a man like John Rollo that the crofter turns most hopefully. Mr. Rollo is an engineer with vision, who runs two crofter-factories in the West Highlands and a small foundry at Wick. He is also director of an engineering works at Bonnybridge, in Stirlingshire.

In 1940 a crofter from the island of Seil, in the Firth of Lorne, 16 miles south-west of Oban, sought employment at the Bonnybridge factory. He was Mr. Donald Dewar, who had been employed in the slate quarries and did not want to risk being directed to a factory outside Scotland when the quarries closed down.

Mr. Rollo, who has a croft on the island, decided to bring a long-cherished plan to a practical stage. Mr. Dewar stayed on in the island and opened a satellite factory in an old smithy at Easdale. That was in 1941 and his only help was a boy. They made machine tools and the mounting war effort caused the works to be transferred to a converted garage and then to the engine-house buildings of one of the quarries. By the end of the war there were twelve men and two women working as skilled or semi-skilled machine-tool makers. And since the war well over 10,000 vices and 5,000 precision lathes have been turned out from Easdale. The introduction of this light industry, modest as it was, helped to save an area that might have been derelict to-day.

THE THRIVING EXPORT FACTORY AT INVERASDALE: Inside the tractor-assembly factory of the Barrmor Tool Company. Working on the small crofters' tractor, at right, is Mr. John Rollo, who made the prototype and who established this industry. The Inverasdale factory produces the tractor for export to all parts of the world.

As a result of this little war effort, skilled and semi-skilled persons were still available for work when peace came. And when the authorities came to consider the reopening of the slate quarries, they were persuaded to do so because that labour was still in the area.

Nowadays the life-blood of the Seil Island community is strong. As well as the crofts which help feed the islanders, there is this extra £2,000 a year in wages. It is estimated that half the wages earned each year from the factory and the quarries goes on general living costs. Another quarter is spent on improving the crofts and the homes of the crofter-mechanics. With electric light and better sanitation and some money to spend, the crofters in this district are not likely to be lured from their homes. In truth, there is security and permanency on the island of Seil.

After the war, Mr. Rollo took his belief in the Highland crofters a step further. North of Oban, in Wester Ross, there is a crofting township called Inverasdale. This is just such a place as might have been dead twenty years from now. Many of the crofters were getting on in years and the younger ones, having tasted life in the Services in wartime, found little to persuade them there was a future existence above the poverty line in the district.

The problem was to keep the returned Servicemen on their crofts. Some of them were employed by the Hydro-Electric Board during the time the area was under development. Then there was a fresh crisis when that work ended with the switching on of the electric power in 1952. That was when the plan for another satellite factory at Inverasdale was produced. Labour came from three young men who had been in the Services in wartime. One of the men, the foreman, was an electrician in the R.A.F. and he took a course at Bonnybridge to become familiar with the work that was to be done at Inverasdale. Now five persons operate semi-automatic lathes, a die-casting machine, two tapping machines and various drilling and grinding machinery.

The factory is an asbestos, prefabricated building mounted on the concrete foundations left after two wartime Nissen huts were taken down. The important point about it is that there is no link production. In other words, each person is a unit and can go away for a day to attend to his croft without holding up any other employee. The five have time cards and these show that a steady rate of production is maintained.

At the start, production was on a foundation bolt—a patent wall fixture—which has been manufactured in large numbers. It is a matter for some wonder that these crofters, with no factory or industrial background before the war, were able to provide the half-million bolts that were used in the foundations for big oil refineries in England and at Aden.

Now the five are producing small tractors for the crofts as well. They are from a prototype developed by Mr. Rollo on his croft at Easdale. It was only in April of 1954 that the first was manufactured. The little tractor can run for six to eight hours on a gallon of petrol,

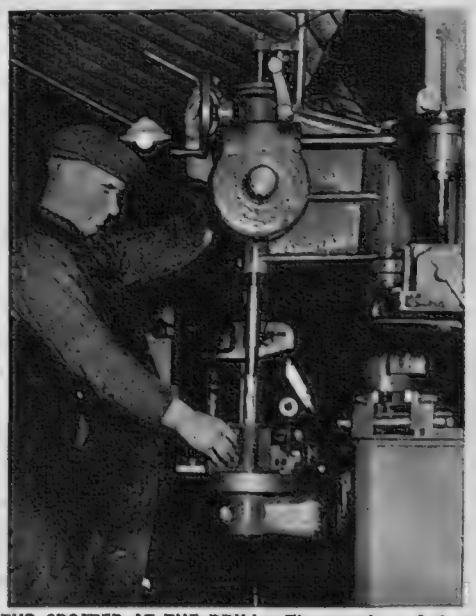
THE ISLAND WHICH WAS REVITALISED BY THE INTRODUCTION OF LIGHT INDUSTRY : The small township of Easdale, on the island of Seil, in Argyllshire. The introduction of a small machine-tool factory has brought new prosperity to the isolated Highland community.

AT THE BUSY MACHINE-TOOL WORKS AT EASDALE : Some of the small factory's products are being taken to the station wagon, which can carry twenty lathes. The new industry stepped in when the slate quarries on the island of Seil closed down at the beginning of the war.

THE "BRIDGE ACROSS THE ATLANTIC" WHICH LINKS SEIL WITH THE MAINLAND : Across Clachan Bridge go the lorries which carry the machine tools produced at the Easdale factory. From Oban they go by rail.

d can plough half an acre a day. It has pneumatic es so that it can run on the roads, and has an draulic lift mounting for the plough, which also takes trong 6-cwt. trailer. Dr. Olivetti, the Italian indus-alist, has two of the machines in Milan. If they are table for the peasant lands of Northern Italy, he will nufacture them there under licence. The fact that tractor can turn in its own length caught the y of fruit-growers from Australia and New Zealand, market gardeners in England and Ireland, when tractor was shown at the Scottish Industries ibition last year. And other tractors have gone to a, Chile, and the Scandinavian countries. It all s up to employment for the crofter-machinists for ng time to come.

It was just after Mr. Rollo got his Inverasdale plant o full production that he was approached about the ndry at Wick, on the east coast. It had been shut for ars. Now the foundry, the only one north of the gland Line, is busy making castings for the Inverasdale nt and such items as manhole covers and the metal ports for public park benches. Six men are employed there may shortly be work for double that number. Mr. Rollo has proved that enterprises like his can . At Inverasdale, for instance, his only capital enditure was what it cost him to deliver and install plant. The county council, under the Town and ntry Planning (Scotland) Act of 1947, provided the and built the factory. That is something for spective manufacturers to remember.



THE CROFTER AT THE DRILL : The routine of the Inverasdale factory is so arranged that an employee can still work on his croft occasionally, without holding up production.

THE TRACTOR PRODUCED BY CROFTERS FOR CROFTERS : This is the small tractor which is being assembled at Inverasdale from a prototype developed by Mr. John Rollo on his croft at Easdale. In a day it can run on a gallon of petrol and plough half an acre.

WORLD SURVEY

A PICTORIAL ACCOUNT OF FOREIGN NEWS EVENTS IN THE FAR EAST, AMERICA, EUROPE AND EAST AFRICA

JAPAN'S VICTORIOUS DEMOCRATS BEAT THE BIG DRUM: Workers at the Democratic headquarters in Tokyo give a Banzai cheer as word is received of another victory by a Democratic candidate. In the centre a Japanese festival drum is pounded. The election resulted in a majority for the Democrats in the Diet.

The Japanese Prime Minister's Democratic Party gained a comfortable majority in the elections held at the end of last month. The Democrats now have 185 seats in the Diet (compared with 124 in the last Parliament); the Liberals, headed by the former Premier, Mr. Yoshida, now have only 112 (180); the Left-Wing Socialists 89 (74); and the Right-Wing Socialists 67 (61). As a result, Mr. Hatoyama, who took office after Mr. Yoshida resigned in December, is confirmed as Japan's Prime Minister. The gains of both the Socialist parties have given them enough votes to block any constitutional reforms which Mr. Hatoyama might introduce. These are likely to include some form of rearmament, and the restoration of a part of the Emperor's former power and influence. Although Mr. Hatoyama and the Democrats are Right-Wing politicians, one of the main issues of the election was the Premier's proposal to throw off the influence of the American occupation, and to make attempts to come to terms with Communist China and the Soviet Union. The Japanese Communist Party made little headway in the elections, but, with the strengthening of the Socialist parties, it may be expected that, for a start, energetic attempts will be made by the Japanese Government to secure peace treaties with Russia and China.

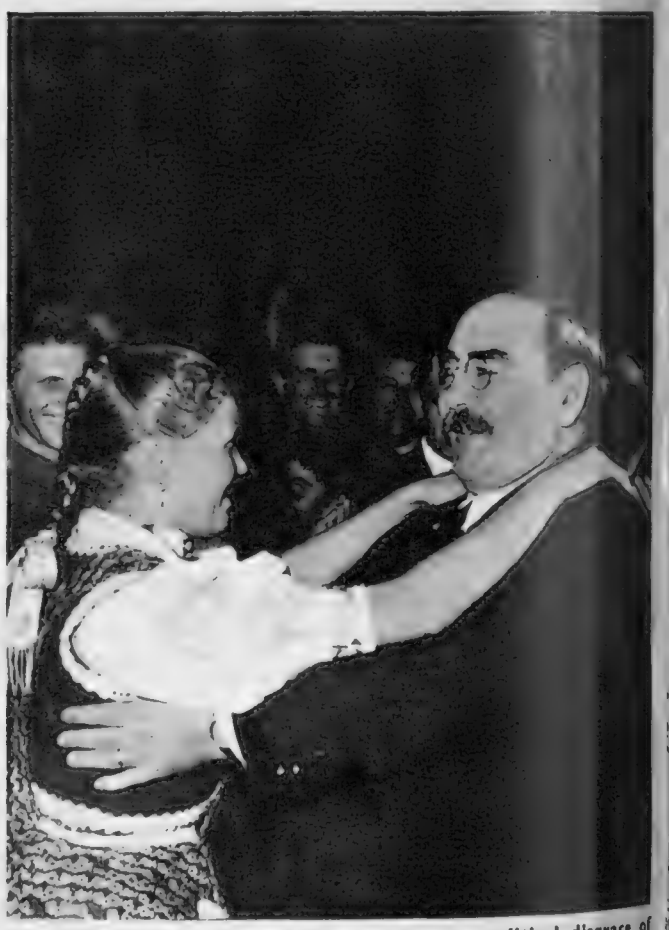
THE JAPANESE PREMIER IS CONFIRMED IN POWER: Mr. Ichiro Hatoyama thanks the Democratic Party workers for their co-operation after news of the Party's victory had come through. Mr. Hatoyama, who became Prime Minister last December after the Liberal Premier, Mr. Yoshida, personally enjoyed a record majority in his constituency.

On right—

MR. DULLES REPORTS TO THE PRESIDENT: The American Secretary of State and President Eisenhower go over the report which Mr. Dulles brought back to Washington after returning from his tour of the Far East. While on his way home from the S.E.A.T.O. Conference at Bangkok, Mr. Dulles visited Formosa, where he conferred with General Chiang Kai-shek and other Chinese Nationalist leaders. In Washington Mr. Dulles declared that Communist China was desperately seeking to overrun "the forward positions of freedom in Asia." He gave a warning to the Peking Government that a repetition of open armed aggression by the Chinese Communists would probably mean "general war in Asia."

On right—

THE STRIKE OF BRITISH SEAMEN IN NEW YORK: Members of the crew of the liner *Queen of Bermuda* are told where they can get a night's sleep after they had walked off the ship in New York. 210 British seamen, most of them stewards, had gone on strike in sympathy with three members of the crew who had been discharged for indiscipline. The vessel was forced to sail to Bermuda without passengers, but the owners, Furness Withy, offered to reinstate most of the strikers. Seventy-six of them flew to Bermuda at their own expense to rejoin the ship; many others waited for the *Queen of Bermuda* to return to New York before availing themselves of the Company's offer. The strike took place after several weeks of negotiation for better terms. The men had signed on in Britain last December for a year's service on the New York-Bermuda run at an average wage of about £40 a month and a monthly bonus of a further £10 14s. Representatives of the seamen asked that the bonus be doubled and that their overtime pay be increased. But the National Union of Seamen told them that they would have to abide by the articles signed in Britain.

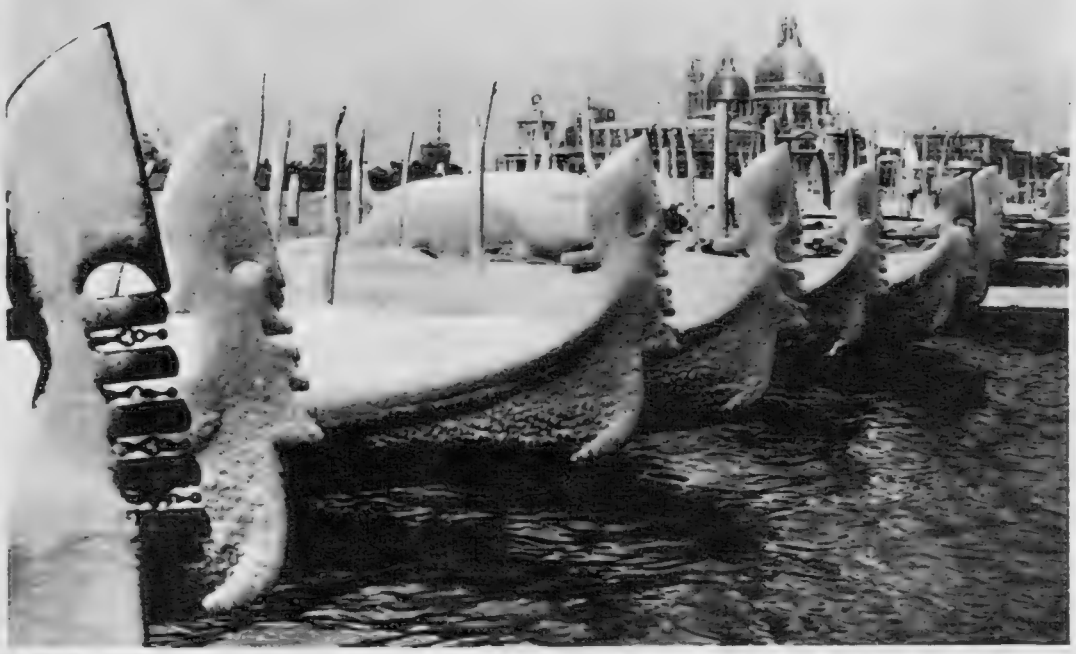


MR. IMRE NAGY IS LED A MERRY DANCE: The political disgrace of the Hungarian Prime Minister was made public last week. Here he is seen at an earlier and more carefree occasion. Now a violent attack has been made on Mr. Nagy, which hints at his removal from office in the near future. The attack was based on a review of Communist Party policy by Mr. Rakosi, who had been replaced by Mr. Nagy in 1953, three months after Mr. Malenkov's accession to power in Russia. His disgrace follows within a few weeks of Mr. Malenkov's fall. Mr. Nagy was accused of much the same crime as Mr. Malenkov had been last month: neglecting the development of heavy industry and defence in order to place excessive emphasis on consumer goods, as Mr. Malenkov had done in Russia. Thus, Mr. Rakosi has turned the tables on Mr. Nagy. When the latter became Premier he made a violent attack on his predecessor's policies, and last year Mr. Nagy accused Mr. Rakosi of using dictatorial methods. However, Mr. Rakosi still remained Secretary of the Hungarian Communist Party, and was reported to have visited Moscow only last month.

THE RIVER OHIO IN FLOOD : A view of the business section of the city of Pomeroy, Ohio, which was reported to be "up to its cash registers" in muddy water. The city, 200 miles east of Cincinnati, was one of the victims of the flooded River Ohio, which broke its banks after torrential storms had broken over it. In this picture Pomeroy's main business street is seen at the edge of the waters.

FLOODS ON THE SECOND FLOOR IN EASTERN KENTUCKY : An aerial view of the business section of Catlettsburg, Kentucky, a town of 5,000 people near Ashland. The town was one of those hit hardest by the flooding of the River Ohio, and, as can be seen from the buildings in the foreground, the waters sometimes reached up to the second floor of houses in some parts of the town. The city of Cincinnati was also badly flooded.

AN AMERICAN PRIEST EXPELLED FROM RUSSIA : The Rev. Georges Bissonnette, an American Roman Catholic priest, on his arrival at Helsinki Airport. He was on his way to New York from Moscow, after being ordered to leave the Soviet Union within three days. No reasons for the expulsion were given ; United States Embassy officials in Moscow were merely informed that Father Bissonnette's presence was "no longer desirable." He had been in the Soviet capital for over two years under the terms of a Soviet-American Agreement, which stipulated that American clergymen could come to Moscow to look after the religious needs of the American community there. The State Department protested to the Soviet Government that the expulsion of Father Bissonnette was a violation of that agreement. It is thought possible that the Soviet action was in the nature of a reprisal against the refusal of the United States authorities to extend the sixty-day entry visa of Boris, Metropolitan of the Russian Orthodox Church, who had visited America as the representative of Patriarch Alexis.



WINTER COMES TO VENICE : Looking more like the craft of ancient Vikings and Norsemen, the snow-covered prows of these gondolas stand idle on the Grand Canal, bearing silent yet eloquent testimony to the heavy snowfalls which have brought the canal traffic in Venice almost to a standstill.

On left—

AT THE LEIPZIG FAIR : The Communist Chinese pavilion at the annual Spring Trade Fair held in East Germany this month. It attracted a steady flow of visitors interested in silks, brocades and other fine examples of old Chinese art. In the foreground stand agricultural implements, described as being representative of industry in modern China. The British exhibits at the Fair also attracted a good deal of attention, notably from East German ministers. Herr Grotewohl, the Communist Prime Minister, purchased a Triumph sports car, paid for in sterling, and several cine-cameras. In East Berlin British motor-cars were exhibited for the first time, and three Standard Saloons were quickly sold.

Above—

THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF RELAXES ON OPERATION "FIRST FLUTE" : General Sir George Erskine (centre) has a cup of tea and a cigarette with the Kikuyu Chief Njiri in the Fort Hall area of Kenya at Kinyona. General Erskine was seeing for himself the progress being made in the latest drive against Mau Mau terrorists, known as Operation "First Flute." At the same time he was conferring with loyal Kikuyu chiefs on new methods of preventing the spread of Mau Mau. The object of "First Flute" is to sweep the forests on Mount Kenya clear of terrorist gangs. Troops taking part in the operation include the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, and the Rifle Brigade.

SEAPLANES, HELICOPTERS AND FREIGHTERS

RECENT AIR NEWS FROM AMERICA, SWITZERLAND AND GREAT BRITAIN

THE UNITED STATES NAVY MAKES GOOD USE OF ITS FLYING-BOATS : A United States Naval P5M Marlin flying-boat is refuelled in the open sea from a submarine during a two-weeks exercise held off the coast of Puerto Rico. *On right*—A Marlin is hoisted on board the U.S.S. *Salisbury Sound*, a tender, during the exercise in which the seaplane proved its value. In America and elsewhere, the flying-boat has been found a most useful aircraft, both as a fighting machine and as a transport. In great Britain, however, official interest in the flying-boat is sadly lacking, although private enterprise is doing its best. Supporters of this type of transport say that not only is Britain missing the benefit of the flying-boat at the present, but she will be lacking experience when atomic engines for aircraft have been developed. It is expected that the flying-boat may be the only plane which could use this type of engine.

HELICOPTER ANTICS IN THE SWISS ALPS : A French-built Djinn helicopter is seen during flight trials in the region of the Mönch Peak, during which, carrying only a pilot, it made a successful landing and take-off at a height of 13,450 ft. This is an unofficial record for rotary-winged aircraft. Later, the Djinn, the rotor of which is driven by compressed-air jets, carrying two passengers as well as the pilot, made a successful landing and take-off from 11,500 ft. A few days previously an American Hiller helicopter (seen *on right*) landed and took off from 11,300 ft. on the Jungfraujoch. This stood as a record until the Djinn surpassed it. These performances by the two helicopters are very impressive, because although the altitude record for rotary-winged craft is well above these heights, this type of aircraft experiences difficulty in landing and taking off at altitude. The air is too thin to allow the helicopter to hover or fly slowly to make a landing. Credit for these performances must be shared equally between the pilots and their machines.

A NEW ALL-FREIGHT AIR SERVICE FROM LONDON TO NEW YORK : The first consignment of goods is loaded into a freighter during a ceremony to mark the inauguration of Airwork Ltd.'s Atlantic freight service from London Airport. This new service will serve Prestwick, Manchester and Montreal as well as the capital cities, and will be linked with a European service. Two return flights will be made each week. A courier is carried to attend to forwarding instructions.

On left—

MR. BOYD CARPENTER PERFORMS THE INAUGURATION CEREMONY : He is (right) cutting the tape to allow loading operations to begin. Also in the picture are, from left : Mr. F. Muntz, Vice-Chairman of Airwork Ltd. ; Mr. Profumo, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Civil Aviation ; behind him Mr. Vestey, President of the Blue Star Line ; and Sir E. Murrant, the Chairman of Furness Withy.

GOING BEHIND

The Machinery and Careful Co-ordination Behind the Scenes at the Royal Opera House

By W. A. DARLINGTON

Special "Sphere" Drawings By JACK MERRIOTT

WHAT are your feelings about a stage-door? Do you regard it as a back way to fairyland, or the entrance to a rather sordid Alsatia? Are you thrilled, bored or antagonistic when chance takes you past it? Or are you simply unaware of its existence?

This is not an idle query, for by your answer to it you classify yourself in regard to the theatre. Some people are incurably romantic about it, and see everything connected with it through a sort of pink haze. Others, among them quite regular playgoers, have barely managed to overcome an inherited puritan prejudice. They enjoy the theatre, but feel they ought not to, and to square their consciences keep their minds off the existence of any world back-stage.

Also there are those simple hearts to whom everything that happens on the stage is real, and to whom almost any inside knowledge of the theatre's working brings disillusion. The most pronounced example of this class that I ever heard of was an old lady whose niece became a famous actress (she is, in fact, playing a leading part in a West End theatre at this moment). When she had her first big London chance, the niece asked the aunt to come up from the country to see her act.

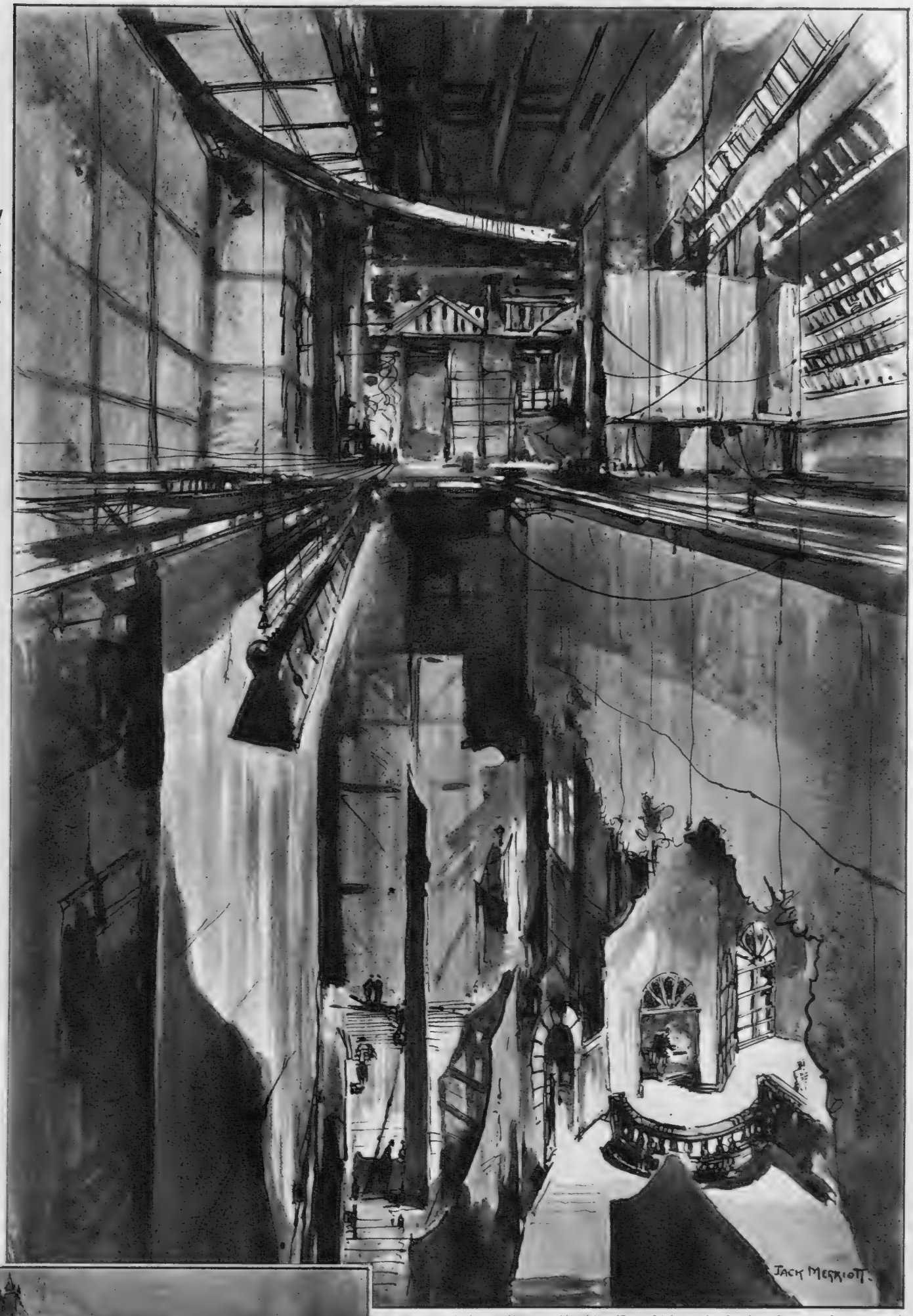
They met after the play, and the niece asked how the old lady had enjoyed the show.

"Oh, very much, my dear. And I thought you were good, too. I had no idea you were so quick-witted."

"Quick-witted, Auntie?"

"Yes. Thinking of all those clever things to say, to make people laugh. I must say I felt proud of you when you made that horrid man you were arguing with look small."

The actress laughed.



BACK-STAGE AT COVENT GARDEN: From high up in the flies the artist has captured the vastness behind a production at the Royal Opera House in London. Below the roof is the curved cyclorama rail. In the centre background is one of the entrances to the flies. Light battens hang on the left, and at the top on the right is a group of lights. The hanging cloths drop to the stage level. Looking down from this height the people and the set seem to be of doll's-house size.

THE EXTERIOR OF THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE: The audience is arriving by car and by foot at the colonnade of the entrance. Both opera and ballet—classical and modern—are produced here. On the left is the Floral Hall of the Covent Garden market.

"But, Auntie, dear, I wasn't making that up. It is all part of the play. The horrid man and I have been rehearsing that argument for three weeks."

"Oh, dear! Do you mean it was all practised beforehand?" The aunt's voice was horrified. "Oh, but I don't like that at all. That makes it all quite different."

And never again for the rest of her life, so the actress told me years later, could Auntie be induced to enter a playhouse.

Perhaps naïveté on that scale is rare to-day. But I am sure there are many who would find a visit behind the scenes, with its close view of the flimsy settings and over-painted players, a deeply disconcerting experience. Such people can never rank among the true theatre-lovers, for their sense of illusion is really nothing but self-delusion.

The true devotees are those who know the theatre thoroughly, back-stage and front, and love it for what it is. Their sense of illusion, when they are seated in front and watching the play, is just as complete as that of the self-deluders, and it is invulnerable because it is a conscious act of surrender—what somebody has defined as "a willing suspension of disbelief."

(Continued on following pages)

GOING BEHIND

On left—
THE PRINCIPAL ARTISTE'S DRESSING-ROOM : It is laid out for the evening's performance, with grease-paint and make-up accessories on the dressing-table and dresses hanging in their order for the necessary changes of costume. The first Royal Opera House was opened in Covent Garden in 1732. The present building dates from 1858. Among the Prima Donnas who may have used this dressing-room are Patti, Tetrazzini, Melba and Clara Butt. In the past year this theatre has given the world premieres of a number of operas and ballets by contemporary British composers and choreographers.

On left—
A CORNER OF THE PAINT-ROOM : This is one of the most important departments behind the scenes. The artist has drawn the section of the room where the costumes are dyed. Two members of the wardrobe staff are seen at this work in the centre. Covent Garden employs a wardrobe staff of sixty-three. They not only make costumes as required but are also responsible for the maintenance of the 20,000 costumes already in stock. The total number of people working in the theatre is about 600. This includes performers, orchestra, stage staff and headquarters personnel.

BETWEEN THE ACTS : During the interval the audience is enjoying a leisurely pause. But on the stage there is feverish activity as the scenery is changed. The back-cloth being brought into position gives the impression of an Arab dhow. The stage staff at Covent Garden numbers about seventy for each performance.

MYSTERIES WHICH ARE REVEALED TO THOSE WHO GO BEH sweeping up to the cyclorama rail, it seems at first in the apparently haphazard piles of scenery and props.

(*Continued from previous page*)

This kind of playgoer has developed a faculty for dividing his consciousness into two separate layers. With his surface mind he can give himself up to the illusion that the people on the stage, and the action in progress between them, are real. At the same time, on a submerged level, he is perfectly well aware of the complicated machinery and the carefully co-ordinated work of organisation, behind the scenes, which help to make the illusion more satisfying.

To most playgoers, this power of full acceptance comes as the result and the reward of experience, but some have it by nature. J. M. Barrie, for instance, whose understanding of the theatre was innate and instructive, has left it on record that when he used to be a regular *habitué* of the little theatre at Dumfries in his schooldays he always liked to sit at the extreme side of the auditorium and as far forward as possible, so that he could not only watch the play, but also see something of what was going on in the wings. In later life, when the box seat had superseded the old-fashioned wings, for interior scenes, at any rate, he could no longer get this double thrill. That may well be why, when he came to write plays himself, he preferred to see them in rehearsal rather than in performance.

H lack-stage during a rehearsal. In the great height st like a factory than a theatre. But there is order stage staff execute their tasks with military precision.

SPACE AND HEIGHT IS NEEDED FOR MAKING SCENERY: The paint-room at Covent Garden has to deal with constantly changing sets for the theatre's repertory. Fifteen operas and nineteen ballets were given last season. Both grand opera and ballet often require elaborate scenery. In the scenic workshops ten people are employed.

Once the faculty of two-level playgoing is acquired, or pleasure in the play is doubled. Although for the ater part of my working life I have been a profes- nal critic, going to the theatre three or four times week, I still find any play worth seeing once is rth seeing twice. I often find the second visit, when m free to watch the wheels go round, is more fun in the first, when duty compels me not to step outside illusion which author and actors are creating. When ave myself written, or had any hand in, a play, I find at I make the transition from one side of the curtain the other without any sense of entering a different rld, such as I had in youth. I may live, as it were, front, but I am equally "at home" behind.

So when I was asked to contribute an article to e SPHERE on what goes on behind the scenes at vent Garden, I accepted with the calm pleasure of e who is invited to spend the day in some pleasantly miliar spot. It would be amusing to breathe the ck-stage atmosphere again, which I had not countered for a year or so. I know Covent Garden, cause in 1948 my paper, the *Daily Telegraph*, had en a fortnight's lease of that theatre in order sponsor Hugh Ross Williamson's dramatization of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. I had spent a good deal of time watching the production in rehearsal. But nothing prepared me for what I found on this new visit. I underwent an entirely new experience.

Covent Garden, as I had seen it before in its close season, had been just another big theatre housing just another straight play with incidental music. It had left much the same impression on my mind as had Drury Lane on a rather similar occasion, when in 1938 the *Daily Telegraph* organized there a celebration of Henry Irving's centenary.

Now I set out with a vague idea that it would be interesting to obtain statistics both from the Royal Opera House and from the Theatre Royal, to see how they compared. But the very first question which I put to Mr. Michael Wood, the head of Covent Garden's publicity staff, showed that there could be no comparison. "How many people are there working in this building?" I asked. And the answer was, "About 600."

Six hundred. It seemed a colossal, almost an incredible figure; but I had omitted to consider that the Opera House is an institution unique in London and almost so in Britain—a repertory theatre in the proper sense of that constantly misused term, a theatre, that is, which changes its programme from performance to performance. What is more, it is a repertory theatre on a gigantic scale, for it never gets the chance, as a normal repertory theatre would, to give its staff a temporary respite by staging a small-scale play with one unelaborate set. Grand opera is seldom unelaborate, neither is the average ballet programme. I was told that at Covent Garden, counting stage staff and electricians, about seventy men are required to see a performance through, the majority of them being full-time employees.

This figure by itself began to put a new complexion on affairs, and when Mr. Wood admitted that his original estimate was an outside calculation and that the working population might, on occasion, drop to a mere 550, my astonishment began to ebb. It receded altogether as the detailed statistics emerged. Roughly speaking, these were as follows:—

Opera Company, 30 principals, chorus 65–70.
Ballet Company, 70–75 people.
Orchestra, normally 80–85, but rising to as many as 105 on special occasions.
Stage Staff (as above), 70.
Musical Staff, 10.
Scenic Workshops, 10.

(Concluded on following page)

THE SPECTACLE TO WHICH SO MANY UNSEEN WORKERS CONTRIBUTE: The drawing is of the stage and auditorium of the Royal Opera House during the last act of *La Boheme*. The artist was in the organ box in the stalls circle. Looking across the orchestra stalls on the far side in the second, or grand, tier is the Royal Box. Almost in the roof are the gallery slips, below them the amphitheatre stalls, and on the level underneath, the balcony stalls, with the upper boxes.

GOING BEHIND

(*Concluded from previous page*)

Wardrobe Staff, who not only make costumes as required, but are responsible for the maintenance of 20,000 already in stock, 63.

House Maintenance, 9.

In addition to all this there is a headquarters staff, with all that that implies in the way of secretaries and typists; departments for such matters as accounts, catering and publicity; a separate management for each company; box-office staff; programme-sellers; commissionaires; and a floating population, busy at the odd jobs which crop up in a concern of this size.

Feeling rather giddy at this encounter with the higher mathematics, I was led down a twisting, half-lit staircase to the stage, where the opera company, wearing a selection from those 20,000 costumes, was beginning to assemble for the dress-rehearsal of *Manon*. There was the absurd medley of types usual on such occasions—fine ladies and gentlemen in period dress conversing amicably with humbler citizenry, while men in very modern cloth-caps and shirt-sleeves, intent on mysterious business to do with lighting equipment, moved among them, apparently as unaware of their presence as if they had been so many invisible ghosts. A little apart, a young man in a tie-wig and knee-breeches, absorbed and completely unself-conscious, was trying over a snatch of music in a voice which none but he could hear. And just behind him . . .

However, I was there to look at the place, not the people, and I turned my attention to the stage. It seemed vast—how vast you can see from the drawings. The proscenium arch cuts the building into two halves, so that if, from your last visit, you can remember how deep is that horse-shoe of seats on the grand-tier level, you have a fair idea of the depth of the acting space. The *Manon* setting, which was of a moderate size as operatic settings go, took up only a fraction of this space, and reminded me sharply of an arrangement constructed on the nursery floor by some ingenious child. I said something like this to my guide, but he only laughed.

"You wouldn't think it so big if we were rehearsing *Aida*," he said. "That leaves very little room to spare. In fact, lack of space is one of our chief difficulties."

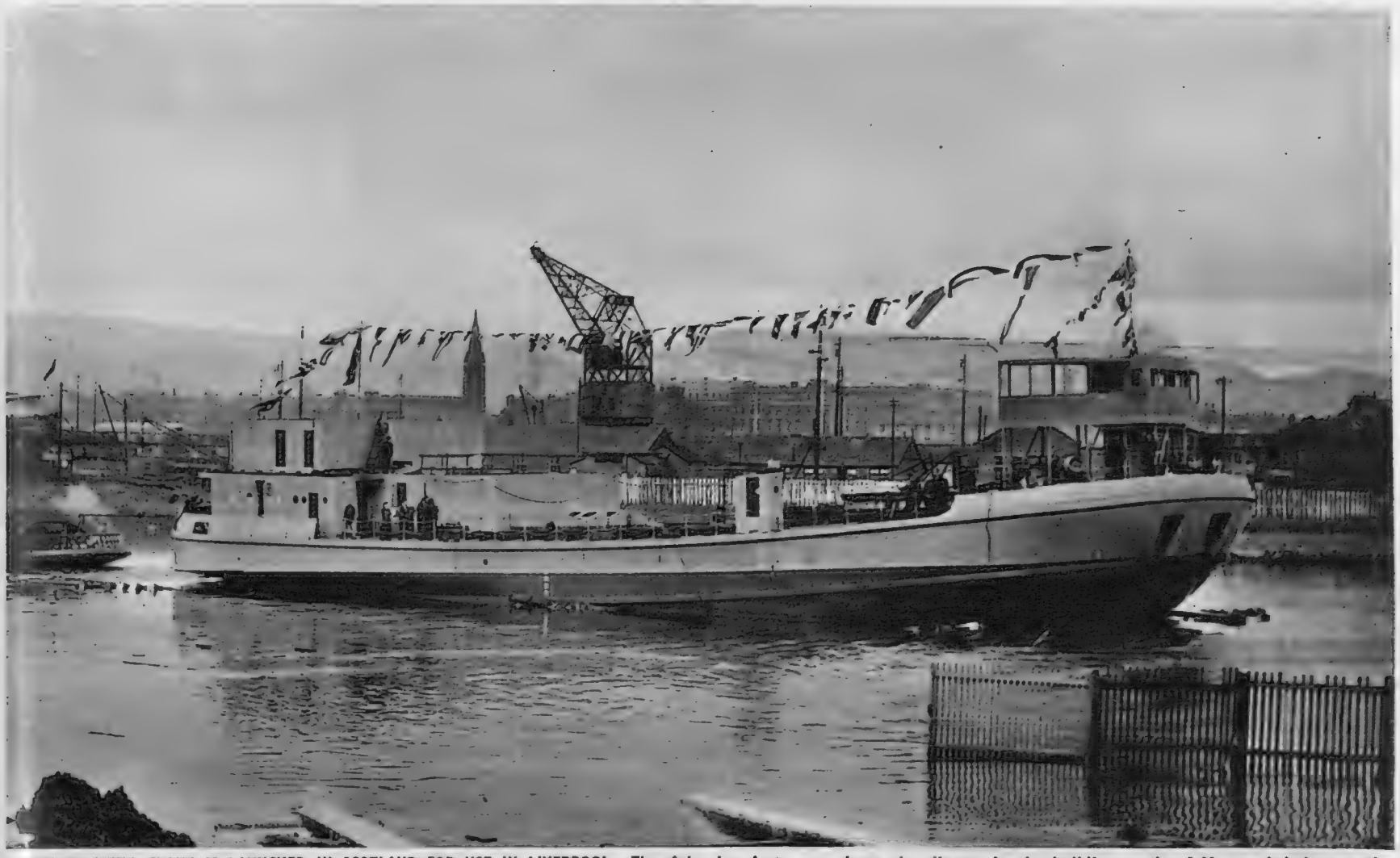
I looked round once again, and I thought of some stages I had seen in my time—one in particular, where the actors have to go out into the street if they want to cross unseen from one side to the other when the curtain is up.

"Really?" I said politely, trying to keep my voice from sounding incredulous and my eyebrows from flying up.

"It's quite true," he insisted, "We're all right for depth, but there's no real elbow-room at the sides—nowhere to park the scenery ready for to-morrow's performance. We have to clear it all away each time, and we haven't enough storage space for it anyway. Compared with some of the Continental opera-houses we are very badly off indeed."

And this, he proceeded to demonstrate, was no joke at all, in view of the enormous repertory which both companies can command. During the season just concluded, the opera company, starting in November, presented fifteen operas, including two never before seen on any stage. The ballet company, beginning in December, put on nineteen ballets, two being new. I took these figures down obediently, but I realised as I did so that I was beginning to lose my capacity for wonder. Any properly sensitive person, I thought, would begin to feel a sense of claustrophobia at the idea of all those huge productions jammed together into an inadequate space, whereas I seemed to be emotionally unaffected. As we turned to go through to the auditorium, I took a last look at the stage. It still seemed vast.

"HOUSE FULL": The notices are up outside the theatre. This impression was drawn from a position close to the Royal Box. Covent Garden has a seating capacity of nearly 2,000. To entertain this audience, the opera company is about 100 strong, with chorus and principals, and the ballet can require 70 to 75 people. The orchestra may number 105 on special occasions. Both the companies command an enormous repertory.



A NEW FLOATING CRANE IS LAUNCHED IN SCOTLAND FOR USE IN LIVERPOOL : The *Atlas* has just come down the slipway in the building yards of Messrs. Lobnitz, on the Clyde at Renfrew. She is a floating crane which has been ordered by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. The launching ceremony was performed by Mrs. Cave, the wife of Mr. F. H. Cave, the General Manager and Secretary of the Board. The new *Atlas* replaces an old floating crane of that name in the fleet of the Mersey Docks. She is self-propelled, 163 ft. in length and carries a crane capable of lifting 100 tons. Floating cranes are an important part of the equipment of modern docks, for they alone can deal with exceptionally heavy and bulky cargoes. For example, large locomotives cannot be handled by quayside cranes and ship's gear. But a floating crane can lift a railway engine from the truck which brings it to the quay, carry it out to the vessel in which it is to be transported, and transfer it aboard. The Mersey Docks and Harbour Board has a fleet of seven floating cranes. Their lifting capability varies from 25 tons to 200 tons.

NEW SHIPS OF MANY SIZES

A Floating Crane for the Mersey ; a Tug for Colombo ; Protection for H.M. Minesweepers ; a Giant Tanker at Hamburg

On left—

A TUG FOR CEYLON : The *Barana* enters the water at Messrs. Thornycroft's shipbuilding yard at Woolston, Southampton. She had just been launched by Lady Corea, the wife of Sir Claude Corea, the High Commissioner of Ceylon in London. The tug will be engaged principally in the berthing of large ships in Colombo Harbour, and has been built for the Ceylon Government as part of the £6,000,000 Colombo Harbour Development Scheme. *Barana* is named after a Cingalese general of 2,000 years ago.

PROTECTION AGAINST THE WEATHER FOR MINESWEEPERS : H.M.S. *Bedham* lies with two other new inshore minesweepers at Hythe, in Southampton Water. She is in reserve. The canvas covering seals the deck and superstructure against bad weather. The *Bedham* is one of the "Ham" class and displaces about 100 tons. Inshore minesweepers operate in shallow waters. They are a new type of vessel embodying many novel features.

GERMANY BUILDS ANOTHER GIANT TANKER FOR GREECE : The *World Grandeur* (38,500 tons) is launched at the Howaldtswerke yard in Hamburg. Within twenty-four hours another tanker, the *World Guardian* (32,500 tons), was launched from the firm's yard in Kiel. Both tankers are for the Greek shipowner Mr. Stavros Niarchos, who has also accepted the tanker *World Guidance* from Kiel.

THE CITY GREETS THE PRINCESS

The Lord Mayor and Corporation of London Entertain Princess Margaret After Her Tour of the British West Indies

Last week Princess Margaret went to the Mansion House in the City of London, to be entertained to luncheon by the Lord Mayor and Corporation in honour of her return home after her month-long tour of the British West Indies. She drove by car from Clarence House and was cheered by crowds along the route and outside the Mansion House, where she later appeared on the balcony with the Lord Mayor. In proposing the Princess' health Sir Seymour Howard spoke of her "splendidly successful tour" and said that it emphasised that "the Royal Family, as head of all the families throughout the Commonwealth, is deeply interested in their life and welfare." He could not help thinking, when she arrived at Antigua on February 14, that the enthusiastic welcome she received from the folk of that island was partly due to the fact that never before had they received such "a rare and sparkling Valentine."

In her reply Princess Margaret thanked the citizens of London for their welcome and said that the ties which bound "this great City to all the territories of our Commonwealth of Nations are strong and abiding." She also spoke of the many schemes of development and progress in the islands which she had visited, and of the memory of "cheerful, friendly and most loyal peoples."

The Royal tour began at Trinidad on February 1, and after a few days in that colony Princess Margaret went on to Tobago, where she joined the Royal Yacht *Britannia* for her cruise through the Caribbean. First came the call at Grenada, in the Windward Islands, followed by a visit to St. Vincent, and then a four-day stay in Barbados. Antigua and St. Kitts were the next islands to be visited by the Princess before she embarked on the 1,000-mile cruise to Kingston, Jamaica. There she attended the celebrations held in connection with the colony's 300th anniversary. Finally, Princess Margaret visited the Bahamas.

CHEERS FOR PRINCESS MARGARET OUTSIDE THE MANSION HOUSE WHEN SHE DROVE TO THE CITY OF LONDON TO BE ENTERTAINED BY THE LORD MAYOR AND CORPORATION AFTER HER CARIBBEAN TOUR : She went out on to the balcony of the Mansion House and remained there for a few minutes while the crowd cheered and waved. Finally, the Lord Mayor called for three cheers and then the Royal party withdrew to the Egyptian Hall for luncheon. Princess Margaret had driven by car from Clarence House and was welcomed at the Mansion House by the Lord Mayor, Alderman Sir Seymour Howard.

GREETINGS AT THE MANSION HOUSE, IN THE HEART OF THE CITY : *Left*—The Princess is welcomed on arrival by the Lord Mayor, Sir Seymour Howard, and, *on right*, waves to the crowd gathered behind the Press photographers. People were heard to call out "Welcome Home" and "Good Luck." For her visit to the City Princess Margaret wore a full-length mink coat over a pink floral dress ; inside the Mansion House she exchanged her mink coat for a mink cape. She also wore a pink-and-black hat.

THE PRINCESS MAKES HER SPEECH IN REPLY TO THE LORD MAYOR'S WELCOME : She said it was always a delight to be home after a long journey and that she was happy to be in London on that day. On her right is the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Fisher. *On left*—The smiling Princess passes an usher on her way from the luncheon.

THE SCENE AT THE LUNCHEON IN THE EGYPTIAN HALL : From left are Sir George Wilkinson ; Viscountess Kilmuir ; the Lord Chancellor, Viscount Kilmuir ; Lady Churchill ; the Archbishop of Canterbury ; Princess Margaret ; Sir Seymour and Lady Howard ; the Lord Chamberlain, the Earl of Scarbrough ; Mrs. and Mr. C. R. Attlee, and Lady Alexander. The Prime Minister was prevented by a cold from attending the luncheon. Princess Margaret received a warm welcome from the guests.

SEEKING THE COMFORTS OF A LAKE DISTRICT FARM: These sheep are clustered in the comparative shelter of Busk Farm, Little Langdale, a National Trust area, below the snow-covered fells of the Lake District. The hard winter and its effect on the sheep poses many problems for hill farmers in all parts of the country.

SHELTERING FROM THE ICY BLAST ON THE WILD SHAP FELLS OF WESTMORLAND: A small flock gathers in an anxious group on the snow-covered hills. This year many of the sheep were left by hill farmers to feed on the heather and moor grass on the uplands. They are surviving this winter better than that of 1947.

THE PLIGHT OF THE HILL FARMER

Winter in the Lake District, One of the Many Areas in which the Hill Farmer is Facing Hard Times as a Result of the Severe Weather and Last Year's Poor Harvest

WHENEVER hill farmers and shepherds meet these days the conversation seems to turn to the prospects of the rapidly approaching lambing season. After a winter of more than ordinary severity, following one of the most disastrous harvests in living memory, the plight of the hill farmer has been a hard one during the last few months, and many a man, with his sheep runs extending over the moors and fells of the Pennines, the Lake Country and the Derbyshire Peak, realises that his ewes are in bad condition and wonders just what can be salvaged.

It is not that the weather has been of the sensational kind, like the blizzards of 1947, when the snow came down quickly and many sheep were buried for weeks at a stretch on the high ground. Even those that were, with difficulty, brought to lower regions, and the lambing ewes that had been wintered near the home farms, fared little better. Great drifts piled up and thousands of sheep succumbed. No one who travelled along the eastern side of Ullswater and saw the clotted carcases and decaying corpses of sheep that had perished on the near-by fells, is likely to forget the scene. Mercifully enough, there has been no repetition of that sad sight.

There have, of course, been losses, but, on the whole, the flocks have fared much better than was the case eight years ago. On that occasion one of the worst-hit farmers in the north-west was Mr. John Drinkall, vice-chairman of the Hill Farming Committee of the N.F.U., who farms some 3,000 acres of fell country at Marshaw, in the Trough of Bowland, and who lost a big proportion of his flock of over 1,000 Swaledale ewes.

This time, Mr. Drinkall made no attempt to bring his sheep down to lower levels, where, of course, there is always the danger of drifting. He left them on the uplands, where there was no shortage of good heather and moor-grass, and although he had two men patrolling and maintaining constant touch with the flocks, he found the sheep came to little harm. During the snows that covered the Pennines for practically the whole of the second half of February, his total losses were one ewe—and he is convinced that had he carried out the same procedure in 1947 his losses would have been much lighter.

HERE CATTLE HAS HAD TO BE SOLD BECAUSE OF A SHORTAGE OF FODDER: A bad harvest and the severe winter have combined to produce a great shortage of fodder at this farm at Skelwith, near Ambleside.

THE MAN WITH A LOAD OF HAY: A flock of sheep follows eagerly the bag of fodder at Troutbeck, Windermere. Special arrangements were made among members of the National Farmers' Union to buy hay at half the market value.

On right—

RESCUED FROM THE SNOW: Four sheepdogs watch two farmers extricate a sheep from a deep snowdrift at Threlkeld, in Cumberland. In the north of Scotland some sheep were rescued by helicopters. Even though many of the animals have survived, the quality of the wool is likely to be poor.

HARD YEAR AHEAD FOR THE HILL FARMER: Most farms like this one in Little Langdale have had to sell a large proportion of their livestock because of the winter.

HILL FARMING IS A CONTINUOUS FIGHT AGAINST NATURE: A view of Fell Foot Farm at Little Langdale, the last farm at the head of the valley before the climb up the Wrynose Pass. This very picturesque but equally rugged part of the country presents a constant challenge to the enterprising men and women who farm it.

But, bad as the weather has been, its effects might ardly have been felt had not the harvest of last year een so pitifully meagre. The irony of it all, was that the rly weeks of the 1954 summer pointed to quite a good ass crop in many northern hill districts and, had it een possible to turn it into hay, all would have been ell. But, of course, this was not possible. The more rtunate managed to get in something like 70 per cent. f the crop, but the hay was of poor quality.

The corn harvest was even more disastrous, and that sulted not only in a shortage of grain, but also of raw. I saw many working in the upland fields within day or two of Christmas, still vainly trying to salvage mething of the rain-saturated, blackened oats that ill remained on the ground. The grain would be useless, t the straw of some value.

Already, by then, many farmers had settled down a winter of anxiety. The general outlook was grim, t the majority were of the opinion that, if the winter mained open, it might be possible to scrape through.

A criticism that was forthcoming in certain places as that the hill farmer had made little attempt to build p his stocks in former years. That could easily be swered by pointing out that not many hill farmers in e north have facilities for storing a big quantity of ay—nor have they the means to buy stocks in excess f their immediate requirements, just in the event of the ccasional catastrophe. When that catastrophe came, any were caught out—through no fault of their own.

The first part of the winter did remain fairly open d mild, although the rain still continued to soak the nd, and in some places autumn ploughing was possible. That, of course, is bound to have its effect the 1955 crops.

In January came the first snows, not deep falls, but fficient to test the ever-diminishing supplies of hay d fodder. What made this early fall particularly onical was the fact that snow in the early part of the ar is often welcomed by the hill farmer, provided that 's a light one and does not last too long. It forces the reeding ewes to turn from natural grazing to fodder, d the change of diet is generally beneficial. But this ar few had fodder in hand to cope with the situation.

It was then that the National Farmers' Union put t its national appeal for fodder supplies for farmers thout winter feed. Officials of the Union, including the esident, Sir James Turner, had visited the hill farms Lancashire and the Lake District and seen something their plight.

Early reports that the appeal had met with poor sponse proved ill-founded. Secretaries of the local unty branches of the N.F.U. received many requests d were able to put members in touch with farmers in the south with hay for sale. Negotiations were opened on a farmer-to-farmer basis and arrangements made for sales at prices round about £10 to £12 a ton. Even with delivery charges on top, this represented only a half of the cost of buying through the open market.

No doubt this scheme saved the immediate situation, and the arrival of something like 400 tons into Westmorland alone within a fortnight of the appeal being made shows how well it was taken up. The alternative must surely have been the drastic cutting down of livestock on many hill farms, particularly when the prolonged spell of frost and snow came in February.

Nevertheless, the situation still shows cause for concern. The hill farmer is mainly concerned with stock-rearing. His income from his flock of sheep is chiefly derived through the sale of wool and of lambs and draft ewes in the autumn. The hill farms also serve as a reservoir from which the dales' and lowland farmers turn for dairy replacements and beef stores. A few are concerned with dairy farming, and the monthly milk cheque is doubly welcome just now. Rearing—whether sheep or cattle—is a longer-term policy, and the farmer who has just laid out a good sum of money on additional fodder must wait some time before he will get any return. And, with stock in poor condition in spite of that fodder, the returns themselves may be less than in normal years.

One of the sheep farmer's main concerns is that the ewes have had little opportunity of building up the reserves of vitality that ensure a good lamb crop and many are in danger of being short of milk. Few will be able to cope with more than one offspring, and twin lambs or triplets are not going to be very welcome on the hill farms this spring.

There is also concern over the wool clip. The wet weather that came before Christmas put the sheep back a great deal and condition was far from good before the frost and snow began. A sheep in low condition can quite easily have from 1 to 1½ lb. less wool in weight—and the quality deteriorates.

The position is certainly grim. But there is one redeeming feature. Hill farming has always been a kind of fight against nature, and the hill farmers themselves have built up a resilience that has enabled them to gain the upper hand. That resilience is going to be one of their best assets in the weeks and months ahead.

Sydney Moorhouse

A NEW WATER SUPPLY FOR ESSEX

Work is Under Way on the Hanningfield Reservoir which will Extend Over Nearly 1,000 Acres and by 1957 will Supply Most of the County's New Communities

An entire valley only a few miles from Chelmsford is to be submerged beneath 6,000,000,000 gallons of water from the rivers Chelmer and Blackwater. Already 3,000,000 gallons are daily pouring over fields and former country lanes. In a short time farms, and even a fifteenth-century manor house, are to be demolished before the waters obliterate them from view, too. These are the beginnings of the Hanningfield Reservoir which, at a cost of £5,000,000, will enable the Southend and the South Essex Waterworks Companies to meet a long-standing need for increased water supply in Essex.

For some time now there has been a trend for water undertakings to share their resources to enable available water to be utilised to the best advantage. In the case of the Hanningfield scheme the South Essex Company is taking an equal share in financing, designing and operating the new works, which will take their water from the two rivers to which the Southend Company has hitherto had sole rights of abstraction. The benefit of the scheme will, however, not be confined to their own districts. Local authorities within the county will have power to reserve additional water from the aqueducts of the South Essex Company, which extend over some 38 miles from Langham to Brentwood.

The need for increasing the resources of the two companies has arisen as a result of the considerable growth in population in their areas of supply. This includes Basildon New Town, in the Southend area, and the London County Council Development, in the South Essex district. In addition, there has been a rising demand in water for commercial purposes and in bulk supplies for neighbouring local authorities. The Langford works of the Southend Company, by the Rivers Chelmer and Blackwater, were designed, in 1927, to deal with 8,000,000 gallons a day. During the drought period of 1933-35, however, the available flow in the rivers decreased so substantially at certain periods that it became apparent that a large storage reservoir would eventually have to be constructed. This was essential for the purpose of equalising the flow of the rivers by storing the winter flow, and also to provide for the increasing demands of the district in the future. The only possible site for such a reservoir proved to be at Hanningfield.

The water will be taken from the two rivers at Langford, and will flow through suitable pipe-lines to an electrically-driven pumping station in the vicinity. From there it will be pumped through a steel pipe 4 ft. in diameter and nearly nine miles in length, to the Hanningfield Reservoir. The scheme is designed to yield, in time of drought, 21,500,000 gallons daily. As at Abberton, twenty miles away, bird-life will become established, and with the pleasant woodlands bordering the great man-made lake, Hanningfield Reservoir may well add to the attractiveness of the Essex countryside, as well as contributing to the county's water supply.

THE BEGINNING OF ONE OF BRITAIN'S BIGGEST RESERVOIRS : Sparkling cascades of water pour over the artificial breakwaters at the inlet channel of the Hanningfield Reservoir, near Chelmsford. The construction of the reservoir is now under way, and by 1957 it should be in a position to yield 21,500,000 gallons of water daily.

AT THE FILTRATION PLANT : Concrete-mixers are busy at the Hanningfield filters. Constructional work has not been hampered by the winter's severe weather.

THE RESERVOIR'S FILTER AND CHEMICAL MIXING WORKS UNDER CONSTRUCTION : When the Hanningfield project has been completed it is claimed that all the water resources of Essex will have been utilised and almost fully developed.

WATER POURS IN AT A RATE OF 3,000,000 GALLONS DAILY : Eventually the whole valley at Hanningfield will be submerged under 6,000,000,000 gallons of water from the rivers Chelmer and Blackwater extending over 900 acres.

THE DISCHARGE CHANNEL THAT LEADS OUT OF THE VALVE SHAFT AT HANNINGFIELD : Among the features of the reservoir now under construction is a dam 6,750 ft. long. When it has been completed 1,200,000 cub. yards of gravel will have been used in making the banking. This winter work has been held up by bad weather, which has hindered earth clearance and the movement of the lorries.

THE ROYAL DEER IN SEVERE WINTER CONDITIONS: In the stark beauty of this scene near the Queen's castle of Balmoral, in the Scottish Highlands of Aberdeenshire, stags and hinds are searching for food. They have been affected by the extreme severity of the winter in Scotland. When this picture was taken there was danger that, in a sudden thaw, the deer might gain access to large areas of feeding-grounds. There they might over-eat and die. So every effort was made to hand-feed them.

WINTER AT BALMORAL

Pictures of the Animals in the Snow on the Royal Estate in the Highlands during a Particularly Cold Spell of Winter

THE QUEEN'S PONIES ENJOY THE SNOW: They are kept in open shelter at Balmoral. When they are let out they plunge through the drifts with every sign of enjoyment.

On left—
"HIGHLANDERS" ARE UNAFFECTED BY THE COLD: The Highland cattle belonging to the Queen have thick, shaggy coats which provide ample protection against the snow.

On right—
HUNGER TAMES THE DEER: Food has been laid out for them in the snow. Because of their need for it, the stag and deer stand watchful but they do not run away when they are photographed.

GRAY'S INN RESTORED

Pictures of the Restoration of the Famous Inn of Court which was Seriously Damaged by Wartime Bombing

Gray's Inn, that centre of legal learning and history, was one of the many treasured parts of London to suffer heavily from bombs during the war. In 1941, the roof and interior of the magnificent Tudor Hall were destroyed—only the walls remaining—and other casualties included the Chapel, the Library, the Pension Rooms and the Benchers' Library.

Under the direction of Sir Edward Maufe, the architect, who is also a Bencher, the Inn has now recovered much of its former glory. All the bomb damage has been repaired and work is proceeding on the parts entirely wiped out by the bombing. It was fortunate, indeed, that only a week before the enemy raiders struck, the world-famous oak-carved screen in the Hall and the stained-glass windows and the pictures there were removed to a place of safety. The architect has most ingeniously restored the roof of the Hall to its original appearance. A worthy addition is the window on the south side commemorating the help given in the restoration of the Inn by the American Bar Association.

Gray's Inn, which was founded at least in the fourteenth century, is one of the smaller Inns of Court. It has a most distinguished list of sons, from Francis Bacon in the sixteenth century to the late Lord Birkenhead in modern times. Sir Winston Churchill is a Master. To-day visitors will find that amid the restored buildings and the dignified flower-beds, the centuries-old tradition of the Inn is preserved.

THE RESTORED HALL AND CENTRAL BUILDINGS IN GRAY'S INN: Looking into South Square, the building on the left contains the Common Rooms and Lecture Rooms. Centre is the restored Hall, and joining it on right are the rebuilt Pension Rooms and the Benchers' Library. Far right are the Under-Treasurer's offices.

GRIFFINS GUARD THE ENTRANCE: They were to ornament the Hall, but now they stand by a gate to the Inn. The griffin is included in the Inn's coat-of-arms.

THE ARMS OF THE PAST TREASURERS OF THE INN: Their colours and inscriptions add to the splendour of the restored Hall, which was opened by the Duke of Gloucester in 1951.

A FAMOUS MEMBER'S STATUE: Francis Bacon was student, 1576; Barrister, 1582; Reader, 1588; Dean of Chapel, 1589, and Treasurer, 1608-1617.

OUTSIDE AND INSIDE THE RESTORED BUILDINGS: *Above*—The entrance to the Pension Rooms and Benchers' Library. *On left*—The screen at the end of the Hall was fortunately removed a week before the Inn suffered serious damage from bombs in 1941. All the woodwork is the original, except for the doors and the fanlights. In the Hall itself the roof and inside were destroyed, but the Tudor walls remain. Within them masques and plays were performed in the sixteenth century, including Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*.

The New Cross and Orb for the Albert Memorial

They are Raised to the Top of the Memorial in Kensington Gardens to Replace those Damaged during the War

At long last the renovation of the Albert Memorial, in Kensington Gardens, is nearing completion. The Memorial has been encased in scaffolding since last spring and workmen of the Ministry of Works have been engaged in the overhaul of the entire structure. It was damaged by bomb-blast early in the war, and this is the first opportunity the Ministry has had of carrying out the necessary repairs, although it was cleaned in 1951. At that time a complete survey was made and it was found that many of the figures adorning the upper part of the Memorial had been damaged, and that the great cross and orb surmounting the entire structure had been damaged beyond repair. New models of the cross and orb have been made from the original designs, and last week these were raised to the top of the Memorial and assembled in position. Some of the renovated figures, one of which (an angel) has been recast, were also replaced. Erected as the national monument to Prince Albert, the elaborate Memorial stands in a prominent position opposite the Royal Albert Hall. It was designed by Sir G. Gilbert Scott, and the gilded figure of the Prince Consort beneath its canopy was by Foley.

THE NEW BRONZE ORB IS RAISED TO THE TOP OF THE ALBERT MEMORIAL: It replaces the old orb which was damaged beyond repair during the war. The original cross has also been replaced. The Memorial is nearly 175 ft. high and the cross and orb crown its summit. Renovation work has been going ahead on the entire structure since last spring. This is the first time that any major repairs have been made to it.

THE NEW CROSS IS PREPARED FOR ITS ASCENT TO THE HIGHEST POINT OF THE MEMORIAL: Together with the orb, it has been made from the original designs. The new 12-ft. bronze cross and orb were not assembled until they were placed in position.

CAREFUL HANDLING IS NECESSARY: The orb is steadied by a workman as it is hauled up through a passageway in the scaffolding. The orb and cross weigh 5 cwt.

SOME OF THE RENOVATED FIGURES ARE READY FOR REPLACING: Many of the bronze figures are double-headed, but the reason for this curious conceit of the designer is not known. The figure of Fortitude is an example, and is the more baffling because only one face can be seen from the ground.

THE HOME NEWS IN PICTURES

A SURVEY OF RECENT EVENTS IN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND

When the Derbyshire Council decided to hasten an avalanche which was surely going to take place sometime, they were setting up an unofficial record, for nothing of the kind had been done in this country before. It is therefore not surprising that the experiment was not fully successful at the first attempt. However, the Deputy County Surveyor, Mr. H. M. Horrocks, was very pleased with the results of the first full blast. It was planned that the overhanging cornice should be blasted on to the road and swiftly cleared away by snow ploughs, but little of the dislodged snow reached the road. Arrangements were made for another section of the overhanging cornice to be attacked on the following day, when more successful results were expected.

AN AVALANCHE HAS BEEN ARRANGED : A close-up of a heavy overhang of snow and ice which threatened to rumble down on the main Glossop to Sheffield road below. So that the road should not be closed indefinitely to traffic, it was decided to hasten the course of nature with a few sticks of gelignite. The men seen on the skyline in this picture are planting the explosives in readiness for the detonation.

On left—

A BIG BANG IN DERBYSHIRE : This was the scene as sticks of gelignite, placed 8 ft. down along 100 yards of the overhang, were detonated. Although many tons of snow were sent swirling into the air and many boulders of ice went careering down the hill, the danger to traffic remained.

A WELSH BOXER WINS HIS THIRD TITLE IN FIVE MONTHS : Dai Dower causes the Italian Nazzareno Gianelli to duck during their contest for the European Flyweight Championship at Earls Court, in London. Dower won the fight on points, and thus added the European title to his British and Empire Flyweight Championships. It was not a particularly thrilling bout, although the boxing was sometimes clever. To most spectators there was never any doubt who was winning. Dower is now understood to be hoping for a fight in Cardiff with the World Champion, Pascual Perez, of the Argentine.

A FIRE IN FALKIRK—FIREMEN STRUGGLE TO CONTROL THE BLAZING TANKS AT THE SCOTTISH TAR DISTILLERIES : The fire broke out in the morning when "lagging," the wooden covering on a tar tank, caught fire. The flames soon ignited the contents of the tank, and later spread to two other tanks, one of which contained creosote oil. Fire units from many places in the vicinity fought for five hours to stop the blaze, which at one time threatened tanks containing high-explosive. As well as damage to the tanks, 250 tons of crude tar and 200 tons of creosote were destroyed. Extensive damage was also caused to the works railway-line and to pipes leading up to the tanks. The total damage was estimated at £10,000. Several firemen were treated for burns and some had to have creosote oil removed from their eyes.

THE VICTOR PROCLAIMED : At the end of his European Flyweight Contest with Gianelli, Dower's arm is raised by the referee, M. Simonon, of Belgium.

TRAINING FOR THE FLAT—UNDER DIFFICULTIES : A string of horses from Mr. H. Wallington's stables at Epsom go for a training canter over the snow-covered course. The long spells of bad weather have had their effect on the preparations for the flat season, as trainers found that they had too few opportunities to exercise their horses.

RACEGOERS ARE DISAPPOINTED BY THE WEATHER : This was the scene at Cheltenham Racecourse Station at Prestbury, when hundreds of racegoers, who arrived for the first day's meeting, found that racing had been cancelled. The bad weather this winter has caused a record number of meetings to be cancelled.

EXCAVATING A GIGANTIC TANK FOR SHIP RESEARCH AT FELTHAM : Two great earth-moving machines are seen as they begin the lengthy task of excavating the new tank which is to be built for the National Physics Laboratory. This tank will have a length of 1,300 ft. along the main waterway, and will be 8 ft. wide. When it is completed the tank will hold 10,000,000 gallons of water and will have a wave-maker, which will be able to simulate a variety of head and following sea conditions. Above the tank there will be a high-speed travelling carriage which will tow models weighing 10 tons at a speed of over 30 miles per hour. This carriage-way will present some intricate engineering problems, as it has to be placed true in space, allowing for the earth's curvature to within a few thousandths of an inch. The tank is by far the biggest to be built in this country. Some 40,000 to 50,000 tons of earth will have to be removed, and the equipment for this has been supplied by Le Tourneau-Westinghouse Company, of Australia. The three machines which are being used work on the plane principle, and tow a blade 8 ft. 6 ins. long, which "shaves" the earth and places the soil in a container which holds 19 cub. yards.

A REAR VIEW OF ONE OF THE AUSTRALIAN EARTH-MOVERS BEING USED AT FELTHAM : The machines are controlled by push-buttons and are being used for the first time in this country. The tank will be dug to a depth of 7 ft., and will rise 20 ft. above ground-level.

On right—

AN ATOM-PROOF BASEMENT FOR A BUILDING ON THE SITE OF A ROMAN TEMPLE : A view of the site of Bucklersbury House, in Queen Victoria Street, London, as workmen prepare the foundations. The basement of this fourteen-storey block of offices is to have a specially strengthened floor, which will enable the sub-basement to be converted into an air-raid shelter if necessary. It is hoped that this shelter will be proof against atomic radiation. Bucklersbury House came into the limelight last year, when a Roman temple found on the site was announced to have been devoted to the worship of Mithras, a Persian god.

The Crews on the Tideway

Oxford and Cambridge make their First Appearances on the Putney to Mortlake Course in Preparation for Next Week's University Boat Race

The arrival of the Oxford and Cambridge crews on the tideway for the final stage of their preparations for next week's boat race did not coincide with springlike weather. Both crews had to contend with rough water during their practice, and it is much to their credit that they overcame these natural hazards with skill. Oxford were first on the river, and they showed impressive form in their very first full course. The crew has now got over its illnesses, and Group-Captain Edwards has in his hands a very fit and experienced boat with an already impressive record. The only fear Oxford supporters have is that their crew will reach its peak too early, but Oxford's experienced coach may be relied upon to deal with that. Cambridge, on the other hand, have been dogged by misfortune, and were unlucky to lose their President, D. K. Hill, only a fortnight before the race. His place was taken by A. A. M. Mays-Smith. The Cambridge crew also rowed an impressive first full course, setting up an even faster time than Oxford. There can be little doubt that next Saturday Cambridge will be in the peak of condition to do battle with Oxford for the 101st time.

THE OXFORD CREW AT WORK: From bow to stern are J. A. Gobbo, the Oxford President, bow; E. V. Vine; J. M. Wilson; D. P. Wells; R. D. T. Raikes; J. McLeod; E. O. G. Pain; G. Sorrell, stroke; and I. Watson, the cox. Gobbo, Vine, McLeod and Pain all come from Australia. Oxford were the first on the tideway this year, and the crew has shown good form in practice for the Boat Race, which will take place on March 26. The final stage of their training is in the hands of Group-Captain H. R. A. Edwards.

THE FIRST FULL COURSE FOR OXFORD: The boat shooting Hammersmith Bridge during the Oxford crew's first full-course trial. The crew impressed with the manner in which they dealt with the rough water. Cambridge also rowed a good first full course.

CAMBRIDGE HAVE THEIR FIRST OUTING ON THE THAMES: From bow to stern are J. N. Bruce, bow; P. DuBois; A. A. M. Mays-Smith; K. A. Masser; S. G. D. Tozer; R. A. G. Monks; J. J. Vernon; A. R. Muirhead, stroke; and P. Lloyd Williams, who was acting as cox in the absence of G. T. Harris. DuBois and Monks come from America.

THE CAMBRIDGE CREW HEAD FOR THE TIDEWAY: Cambridge have been singularly unlucky in their training this year, and barely a fortnight before the race it was announced that their President, D. K. Hill, had to withdraw from the crew because of chicken-pox. His place was taken by A. A. M. Mays-Smith.

THE GOLD CUP AT CHELTENHAM

Bad Weather Reduced this Famous Steeplechase Meeting to Two Days

As far as the weather is concerned, this has been quite the worst National Hunt season ever, and as the Gold Cup meeting approached, it looked as if the seal of misfortune would be placed on it by cancellation. On the day the meeting was to have opened, snow and heavy frost made racing impossible. On the second and third days, after frosty nights, the Stewards had to make extensive inspections of the course before, at the last moment, they declared Prestbury to be fit for the heavily-restricted programme of racing. It says much for the hardiness and enthusiasm of racegoers, led by the Queen and Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, that ample crowds still flocked to Cheltenham to see the sport.

Inevitably the restrictions on training which the weather has imposed on trainers left their mark in the results, and it was noteworthy that the horses from Ireland were once again well to the fore. The two main events, however, were won by English trainers. H. Price, from Findon, in Sussex, saddled the winner of the Champion Hurdle, Clair Soleil. This French-bred six-year-old was superbly ridden by F. Winter to hold off the challenge of the Irish-trained Stroller by a head. Gay Donald, the winner of the Gold Cup, was bred and trained in Wiltshire. Few gave much thought to Mr. P. J. Burt's nine-year-old from J. Ford's stables, and no one could have imagined the margin of his victory over his eight rivals. Three fences from home A. Grantham took Gay Donald into a clear lead, and although he took the last two obstacles indifferently, he was still ten lengths ahead of Halloween, with Four Ten, last year's winner, another eight lengths behind, third.

FIRST TIME ROUND IN THE GOLD CUP : The leaders taking the grandstand fence during the race for the Gold Cup at Cheltenham. From right are Four Ten (ridden by T. Cusack), who finished third ; Bramble Tudor (R. Curran) ; Halloween (F. Winter), second ; and, almost hidden, the winner, Gay Donald (A. Grantham). Trained by J. Ford, of Cholderton, Wiltshire, Gay Donald started at 33 to 1.

THE QUEEN AND THE QUEEN MOTHER AT THE MEETING : With the Queen at left is Lord Willoughby de Broke, and the Queen Mother is accompanied by her trainer, Mr. Peter Cazalet. On the second day of racing two of the Queen Mother's horses were running : Devon Loch was third, and M'as-tu-vu unplaced.

THE WINNER OF THE GOLD CUP : Gay Donald, ridden by A. Grantham, goes over the last fence some ten lengths ahead of any rival. He is owned by Mr. P. J. Burt.

AN AWKWARD MOMENT FOR HORSE AND RIDER : T. Molony stands in his stirrups when Mr. D. Odell's Inscrutable makes a bad mistake in the Cotswold Steeplechase. Next to him is Mr. E. Bee's Bob tailed 'un, ridden by J. Dowdeswell.

MAKING WHOOPEE : Superstitious backers who steer clear of horses numbered 13, see themselves justified as Mrs. L. Brotherton's Whoopee takes a tumble in the Cotswold Steeplechase. The rider, G. Slack, is thrown over the horse's head.

ANOTHER EFFORT FOR SAFER DRIVING

The Ealing and Finchley Road Safety Committees Launch a "League of Safe Drivers"; More "Cut Price" Petrol; the Possibility of an Increase in Car Policy Premiums; and News of "Conversions" and "Dream Cars"

BY "THE SPHERE" MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

FOLLOWING the example of road safety campaigners in Northumberland, the Ealing and Finchley Road Safety Committees have launched a League of Safe Drivers and invited various local authorities in Middlesex to co-operate by starting local branches.

I think it is an excellent idea; a really practical approach to this grisly problem of road casualties. Full credit to Mrs. H. G. Duncan, of Finchley, and Mr. H. J. Bishop, of Ealing, who are the chief sponsors of this new effort to cut the accident figures.

The main idea is to encourage drivers of cars and commercial vehicles and motor-cycles to take a pride, both in their driving and in the roadworthiness of their car, van or motor-bicycle. The League organises special courses of instruction in vehicle maintenance and issues badges to men and women who attend these classes and pass proficiency tests.

Chief objects of the lectures are to teach road users something about the mechanical workings of their cars and motor-cycles, to foster a sense of pride in keeping them in good order and to give simple guidance in rectifying mechanical faults that could lead to accidents.

League members have to sign declarations in which they promise to keep their vehicles roadworthy; to help other drivers when the need or opportunity arises; to drive carefully; follow the Highway Code diligently; observe zebra crossings meticulously; give way to children and elderly people; and concentrate on giving clear signals.

In these days of widespread criticism of alleged cartels and price-fixing "rings" it is interesting to learn that another brand of "cut price" petrol is about to appear in Britain. It will soon be on sale at a number of independent garages in the West Midlands and will cost a penny less per gallon than the leading brands for both premium and commercial grades.

This new "challenge" to the big oil firms comes from forty-four-year-old Mr. Cyril Kieft, a Welshman who runs a big drop-forge at Wolverhampton, and whose other business interests include the supply of Diesel oil, paraffin and lubricating oils at special contract rates to farmers, transport organisations and other big firms.

Mr. Kieft, who is well known as the designer and builder of racing and sports cars, has arranged with a South American oil company to supply him with 12,000,000 gallons of crude oil every year for a number of years. It will be refined at Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, and distributed from there in Mr. Kieft's own road tankers to independent garages in four counties: Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Staffordshire and Shropshire.

The "super" grade will be known as "Kieft Grand Prix" and the cheaper fuel will be called "Kieft Commercial." Mr. Kieft has no illusions about the possibility of forcing the big oil companies to bring down their petrol prices. "I don't think I'm big enough for the petrol giants to worry very much about me," he commented. He's probably right. Don't forget there are already a number of small firms, operating in various parts of the country, who buy crude oil, get it refined and then sell it to the public at less than the normal price.

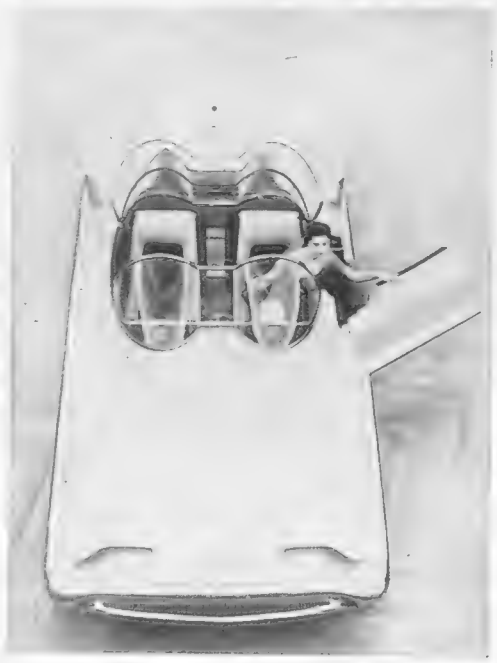
Although the British insurance companies had a better year with their motor business in 1953 than for a number of years, I am advised that the danger of our car policy premiums going up has not been averted, by any means.

The risk is still definitely there. Figures published the other day gave a reminder that although the companies—nearly seventy of them—represented by the Accident Offices' Association, showed an underwriting profit of £3,628,000 on their motor insurance business in 1953—the first profit since 1949—they have still incurred a net loss of well over £6,000,000 on motor insurance since the war.

In insurance circles it is considered likely that if, and when, motor premiums are raised, those for commercial vehicles will be the first to go up. One reason they have remained more or less unchanged since 1951—when the last general increase in premium rates took place—is that most of the companies' motor insurance is done abroad. And there have been widespread increases in premiums overseas since 1951.

That was a fine achievement Jaguars pulled off recently on Daytona Beach, in the U.S. Driving a "D"-type Jaguar, Phil Walters, noted U.S. racing man, broke all records for the Daytona speed trials with a mean speed of 164.138 m.p.h.

The car—a standard production model—belongs to Mr. Briggs Cunningham, wealthy American patron of motor-racing. It beat by wide margins the fastest times put up in the speed trials by Germany's Mercedes cars and Italy's Ferraris. It was 12 m.p.h. faster than the 4.9-litre Ferrari which won the 24-hours race at Le Mans last year.



A "250,000-DOLLAR LABORATORY ON WHEELS": The Lincoln Futura is seen passing an old buggy during its first run through New York. *On left*—An overhead view of the model, which is almost 19 ft. long and 7 ft. wide. When the driver pushes the interior door-handle the twin plexiglass domes automatically swing back, releasing the door-latch. As the door is closed the dome-roof pivots back into place.

The "hotting-up" of inexpensive, quantity-built British cars to give them a sports car performance has become quite a profitable business for a number of firms. Different companies specialise in "converting" particular makes of car, but the *marque* which seems to lend itself especially well to this living-up process is Ford.

The 6-cylinder Zephyr and the smaller Consul are not exactly sluggish, even in their normal state of tune, thanks partly to a more-than-usually favourable power-to-weight ratio. When the hotting-up specialists have been at work on them the results are sometimes staggering, not to say frightening!

One of the most successful Zephyr conversions is that evolved by Mr. Raymond Mays, of Bourne, Lincs. This well-known racing driver, under whose supervision the new 2½-litre B.R.M. is taking shape at Bourne, steps up the Zephyr's normal brake horsepower from 68 to 100, and its normal top speed from 80 to 100.

He does it—at a cost of £105—by (amongst other things) fitting a light alloy cylinder head with six separate inlet ports and installing two carburettors. The compression ratio is raised to 8.2 to one. The result is a very lively motor-car and any Zephyr owner who has his car converted in this way is well advised to give an order for the special anti-fade brake linings recommended by Mays (£6 19s. 6d. extra) and special rear shock absorbers (£6 6s. more).

If you wanted to go to town on this hotting-up business in a big way you would also have fitted the Laycock de Normanville overdrive device which (for £72) converts a three-speed gear-box into one with five ratios.

The new Highway Code will be on sale, price one penny, next week. The Transport Minister has stuck to his decision—and quite rightly, I think—not to give free house-to-house distribution. All the same, 8,000,000 of the 10,000,000 now being printed *will* be distributed free.

Half a million are being earmarked for provisional licence holders; all motorists will get a complimentary copy when they renew their licences; 1,000,000 copies will go to senior schoolchildren; and the rest of the 8,000,000 will go to the police, the armed forces and other bodies.

Every motorist should make a special point of reading this new Highway Code very carefully. It is a much more attractive—and convincing—document than its predecessors and could do much to make road users (including pedestrians, which means all of us!) more "safety-minded." All the regulations, fines and prisons in the world cannot by themselves solve this grave problem of road slaughter. What is urgently needed is a new attitude of mind, and that is why I applaud the formation of the League of Safe Drivers.

The creation of "dream cars" has become quite a craze in the United States. Personally, I hope that most of them will not progress beyond the dream stage. I suppose they serve some sort of purpose. Publicity, perhaps. And public reaction to some of their more outrageous features may do something to curb the designers' impetuosity.

I can't, for instance, see the Ford Motor Co.'s Lincoln Futura becoming available to America's great motoring public in the near future in anything like the form it assumed when Mr. Benson Ford, a vice-president, gave it an outing in New York's Central Park the other day.

He called it a "250,000-dollar laboratory on wheels." It has a wheelbase of 126 ins., is almost 19 ft. long overall and is 7 ft. wide. It has twin plexiglass domes and the publicity material states that the car's all-steel body "is a beautiful pearlescent, frost-blue-white, painted with lacquer made from the distillation of fish scales. This unusual paint gives the body an iridescent quality."

There are "shark fin" rear quarter panels and the experimental o.h.v. V-8 engine develops 330 horse-power. The Futura has push-button, turbo-drive and automatic transmission, with controls on a centre pedestal armrest.

A compass is mounted on the cowl in front of the driver and the Futura has air scoops on the top of the rear fenders (wings to you) which feed the air-conditioning system and cool the rear brakes. And so on. . . .

Two things more before we run out of space. . . . I enjoyed the Girling party at Birmingham's Grand Hotel. These big get-togethers can be a bore, but there were no long faces at this one. Mr. Alex Fraser, the Girling chief, told his guests in a short speech that the British motor industry is on the threshold of the greatest period of expansion and development in its history. The output of the industry last year was three times that of five or six years ago, he said. "People are asking 'Can it continue?'" Mr. Fraser went on. "Well, I for one have the utmost confidence in the ability of the industry to meet and pass the targets it has set for itself."

Finally . . . I have just been looking through the 1955 edition of *Hotels in the British Isles*, published by the British Travel and Holidays Association. It is a greatly improved guide and well worth the 5s. they are asking for it.

It runs to 360 pages and contains detailed information, including rates, about more than 4,000 hotels in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. For anyone who is planning a motoring holiday, a particularly valuable addition to the guide this year is a description of all the cities, towns and villages for which hotels are listed.

MERCEDES RE-ENTER THE SMALL SPORTS-CAR MARKET: They are making their reappearance after an absence of thirty years, with the new Mercedes-Benz "190 SL," 2-litre sports car, which was seen for the first time at the Geneva Motor Show. The power unit is a single overhead camshaft engine, with a capacity of 1897 cc., developing 105 b.h.p. at 5,700 r.p.m. It is said to have a comparatively low petrol consumption and to be capable of attaining 112 m.p.h.

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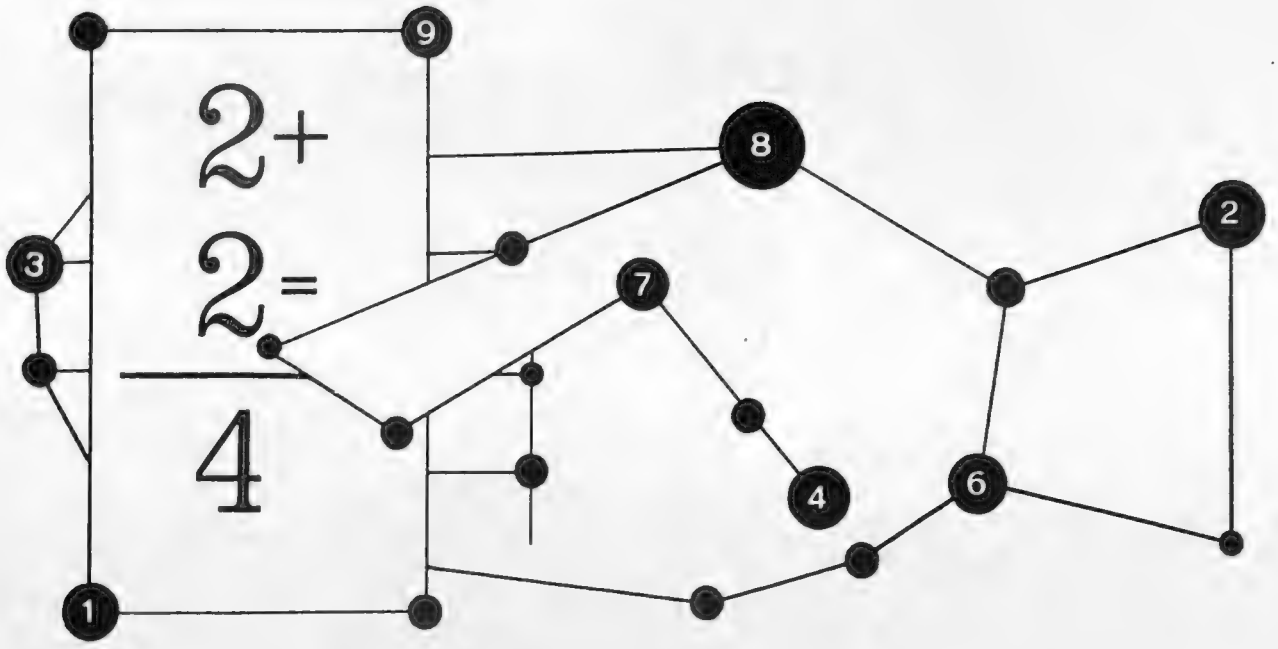

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The World of Books

THE ROLE OF KATHARINA SCHRATT

Professor Kürenberg Tells the Story of the Friend and Confidante of Franz Joseph; Major-General Fuller Continues his "Decisive Battles"; Two Novels About Napoleon

KATHARINA SCHRATT lived until 1940, but her memory centres round the Court of the Emperor Franz Joseph I, and she comes as near as any figure in nineteenth-century history to duplicating the role of Madame de Maintenon, the friend and confidante of Louis XIV. Both were women with qualities of heart and of mind, and both exercised those qualities as a steadying influence at Court. It has fallen to Joachim von Kürenberg, who knew Katharina Schratt from 1915 to 1938, and who has had access to some original diaries and documents, to tell her remarkable and romantic story. He calls his book A WOMAN OF VIENNA (Cassell. 21s.), but, really, he focuses attention on three characters in particular, the Emperor Franz Joseph, the cautious, precise and autocratic ruler of a vast but ramshackle Empire, his impetuous and mercurial wife, the ill-fated Empress Elizabeth, and Katharina, the actress of the Hofburg Theatre, the daughter of well-to-do parents of Baden-by-Vienna.

It was when the Emperor and Empress became estranged because of sheer incompatibility and the former drifted into the life of a recluse, a quasi-monastic seclusion perilous alike for his country and his Empire, that Elizabeth, realising the futility of her own efforts, deliberately chose another woman to accomplish that which she herself could not accomplish. It was an astonishing piece of intuition to have selected Katharina Schratt, for Elizabeth made her choice from a most improbable *milieu* and on what seems to have been the most slender information. Professor Kürenberg presents his story clearly and well, but there are many gaps in it, a reminder of the fact that in the last days of her life Katharina made a great bonfire of all her possessions.

The author has gone to many sources in order to piece together his intensely dramatic story, including, as it does, the tragedy of Mayerling, the assassination of the Empress at Geneva, and the assassination of the Emperor's nephew and heir at Sarajevo. The picture he leaves of Katharina is of a most gracious lady, a woman of solid good sense and of a natural gaiety of heart, who never sought honours and could share the most weighty secrets, without ever wishing, in the Emperor's lifetime, to divulge a word of what she had seen and heard.

Major-General J. F. C. Fuller takes us, in the second volume of his scholarly trilogy THE DECISIVE BATTLES OF THE WESTERN WORLD, from the Armada to Waterloo (Eyre and Spottiswoode. 35s.). The book opens with the keen rivalry of England and Spain, when England became endowed with the prestige that Spain lost and began to set out upon her imperial way. At the end of the volume we see Britain's triumph over France on the field of Waterloo. We learn just how close Wellington came to defeat in that great battle, but we are left with the thought that victory was really won long before that at Leipzig. For after that Battle of the Nations, France was far too exhausted to recruit her strength again.

Waterloo was the coping-stone, just as Trafalgar was really only the coping-stone upon the strategic victories already obtained at sea. Major-General Fuller is a knowledgeable guide through the mazes of history, who understands the full implications of war, both political and commercial, and can interpret them in simple, but far from featureless, prose.

And here are two more authors, each concerned with a decisive battle, the one lost and the other won. In THE SEA WOLVES (Weidenfeld and Nicolson. 21s.) Wolfgang Frank tells the story of the German U-boats in the Second World War. Herr Frank was one of Admiral Doenitz's staff officers, and the Grand Admiral dominates the story. Doenitz was a formidable driving force. He firmly believed that, alone of all the weapons in the German armoury, the U-boats could win the war.

What Herr Frank does for the German U-boats Cyril Joly does for the British tanks, but in a very different way. In TAKE THESE MEN (Constable. 15s.) he has compiled a documentary narrative of extraordinary interest, vividly recalling the Western Desert campaigns and the courage and endurance of men who fought in circumstances that led them time and time again to the borderland of complete exhaustion. The author gives a valuable overall picture, but its great virtue is in the way it focuses attention upon everyday personal experiences in the field. Cyril Joly does not for a moment try to glory in war or to hide its horror and futility, and perhaps his book is best summed-up in his apt title, taken from a quotation from Pericles' Funeral Oration, "Take these men for your example."

SIX VENTURES IN VILLAINY (Cassell. 15s.), by Jack Smith-Hughes, is a vigorously fascinating account of murder, abduction, seduction and assorted forms of chicanery in the days of George III. The author makes his villains, if not likeable, at least understandable. Their deeds had a zealous quality of wrong-doing triumphantly an end in itself. Richard Patch, who murdered his partner at Rotherhithe in 1805, was almost a conventional killer by to-day's standards, but Lord Cochrane's Uncle Andrew in London and John Macarthur in New South Wales were indigenous to their time. The activities of neither could last long to-day, for tele-communications would soon catch up with them. Of the six ventures the tussle between Captain Bligh (of the *Bounty*) and John Macarthur makes the best reading. Here we have new light on Bligh, and the whole account is an excellent microcosm of early days in a British colony.

When Hervey Allen wrote *Anthony Adverse* and Margaret Mitchell wrote *Gone With the Wind*, they brought to their tasks an historical accuracy combined with a rare gift for story-telling. Now another author emerges with the same touch. Catherine Gaskin, who was acclaimed as Australia's literary prodigy when her book *This Other Eden* was published at the age of seventeen, achieves, in SARA DANE (Collins. 12s. 6d.), a remarkable maturity. Here is Sydney and the hinterland of New South Wales at the end of the eighteenth century, in the days when free farmer immigrants mingled with convicts to make up the new colony round Botany Bay and along the Hawkesbury River. Sara Dane, who was sentenced to transportation for a childish prank, is a most convincing central figure—an upright woman, hard as steel, a business woman to the finger-tips, a lady with very much the Scarlett O'Hara manner, but a person of integrity. Miss Gaskin has based this vivid portrayal on the great Mary Reibey, who is something of a legend in Australian history. The pioneering background is magnificently presented, whether we are carving a new world in the back blocks or immersed in the hectic trading activities of rum-soaked Sydney, where a giant trading ring has full control of the colony's imports, holding the whole population to ransom. This is a novel to remember. This sort of thing has often been done for America, and now Catherine Gaskin has done it excellently for Australia.

JEAN COCTEAU IS ELECTED MEMBER OF THE ACADÉMIE FRANÇAISE: The poet, novelist, playwright is seen (standing) in conversation with François Poncet, Maurice Garçon and Madame André Maurois (wife of the distinguished historian and novelist), during a reception after the election. There were eleven candidates for three seats in the French Academy. The other two who were elected being M. Albert Buisson (perpetual secretary of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences) and M. Daniel-Rops (Roman Catholic historian and writer). After his election M. Cocteau said that the Academy was, in France, the best survival of a world "which a new world has not yet had the strength to replace."

Plays and novels about Napoleon are legion. The flow has gone on steadily in modern times. Despite counter-attractions, Bonaparte remains a colossus upon the world's stage. Two women writers, Willa Gibbs and Rosamund Chambers, give us novels on the Napoleonic theme. In THE TWELFTH PHYSICIAN (Eyre and Spottiswoode. 12s. 6d.) one of the central figures is Charlot Florian, the doctor who defied the medical edicts of the Robespierre terror. Florian finds himself a convict in Guiana's dread penal settlement of Sinnamarie, but eventually he returns to serve the conqueror. In *The Twelfth Physician* we see Napoleon in the first surge of his career before power debased him.

THE LOSING FIGHT (Cassell. 15s.) takes us to the other end of the scale, to the mature Napoleon at the height of his powers. Miss Chambers portrays Josephine at thirty-seven, still a very attractive woman, striving to maintain her hold upon Napoleon against her childlessness, the enmity of his family and the demands of dynastic policy. Both these books have behind them a wealth of careful research. In both, the scenes are crowded, diverse, and swift-moving in the best manner of the historical novel.

"LAST LONDON APPEARANCE" OF GIGLI: The Italian tenor, Beniamino Gigli, greets Miss Patricia Warren in his dressing-room at the Royal Albert Hall when he sang there in a "farewell" performance. He sang ten encores in response to an overwhelming ovation from the audience. Gigli, who was born in 1890, first came to Covent Garden in 1930.

Rayne Kruger's THE EVEN KEEL (Longmans. 10s. 6d.) is a robust and readable novel, full of suspense, mounting to a tremendous climax, but this efficient writer is not without shortcomings. Above all, perhaps, he does not ring quite true. *The Even Keel* is the story of Clifford and Porteous Danely, brothers of widely differing temperament, and the impact upon their lives of the financial colossus, Bellairs Coombe, and a girl, Julia Somerson. Within the boardroom of Clifford's great shipbuilding company the drama unfolds the struggle for possession of the Danely shares, and, of course, the struggle for the possession of Julia. The settings are realistic, whether they be in the Danely shipyard or amid the high-spots of London, or in the week-end atmosphere in which Clifford Danely so obviously rejoices. Suspense is maintained to the end. But somehow the characters are not convincing.

Graham Sutton's latest story belongs to the days when Thomas Walsingham had secret business in every part of the realm of Queen Elizabeth I. In THE ROWAN TREE (Hodder and Stoughton. 12s. 6d.) our attention is directed, in particular, to the Lake District and the Cumberland fells. There is plot and counter-plot, treason and treachery. We see the Queen's spies negotiating with Philip of Spain to arrange an invasion of the north-west coast of England. Mr. Sutton has achieved a clever piece of writing. He presents us with a book which cannot be set upon one side, and if we are saddled with a pious and unsatisfying heroine, the author soon makes things right by finding a gipsy lass for his unsatisfied hero.

If there is one criticism that stands out clearly, it is that Cumberland, in these late sixteenth-century days, seems to have been a peculiar place. It was impossible, apparently, to venture forth without everyone knowing of one's business. Surely in those great expanses of the northland men did move fairly freely 350 years ago? Mr. Sutton's rich sense of local life and colour is well to the fore in this commendable new novel.

And now two novels that have in common a smouldering excitement, and are utterly diverse in their setting. Anthony Bloomfield's RUSSIAN ROULETTE (Hogarth Press. 12s. 6d.) is a drama of life and death in a North Country seaside resort, its two principal characters driven on by self-destructive urges. Edith Templeton's THIS CHARMING PASTIME (Eyre and Spottiswoode. 12s. 6d.) has its setting amid the Sicilian sunshine and the hot passions of the deep South. After all, we discover it is not such a far cry from Mr. Bloomfield's northern resort, with its grey boarding-houses and rainswept streets, to Miss Templeton's Taormina, with its ruined Greek temples and bluest of blue seas.

Lionel Ferguson's INTO THE BLUE (Collins. 16s.) is somewhat surprisingly dedicated to Thucydides, but, after all, why not? Thucydides wrote about what men did and not what they ought to do, and *Into the Blue* is all about men who did. These men are five Cambridge undergraduates who set off during the Long Vacation to Lake Tana, the source of the Blue Nile in Abyssinia. The party was composed of three geographers, an historian and an economist. En route and at journey's end, they encountered high adventure. This is grand reading, and we must congratulate these five young men who achieved so much through a combination of luck, determination and hard driving through the mud and sand of Africa.

Eric Bentley's IN SEARCH OF THEATRE (Dennis Dobson. 35s.) is, as its title suggests, also the story of an expedition. The author is in search of the things the theatre needs if it is to survive, and this wide-ranging survey is the outcome of lifelong enthusiasm for his subject and not a little hard thinking.

Richard Edmonds

In **HIGHWAY TO THE NORTH** (Benn. 25s.) *Frank Illingworth recalls his journeys in words and pictures, along the Alaskan Highway from Mile Post Zero to Fairbanks, 1,500 miles away, and far beyond this to an Eskimo village opposite the coast of Siberia.*

Another book of travel interest, yet dealing with the prevailing conditions on a vast continent, is entitled **BEWARE OF AFRICANS** (Jarrolds. 18s.). *It is by Reginald Reynolds and tells of a pilgrimage from Cairo to the Cape.*

THE INEXHAUSTIBLE SEA (Macdonald. 16s.), *by Hawthorne Daniel and Francis Minot, is an account of what can and must be done to bring the ocean's measureless resources into the service of mankind. The book is illustrated, and the authors have devoted many years of study and practical experience to their subject.*

W.S.C., A CARTOON BIOGRAPHY (Cassell. 16s.), *compiled by Fred Urquhart, is a biography in pictures, by the world's great cartoonists, of the career of Sir Winston Churchill. There is a foreword by Harold Nicolson and the book is dedicated "to the great man who is the subject of the following pages."*

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IN QUEST OF GOOD HOTELS

ADVICE BY ASHLEY COURTENAY

Letters, accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope for reply, should be addressed to him, c/o The Editor, THE SPHERE, *Ingram House, 195–198, Strand, London, W.C.2.*

THE opening of the first American-owned hotel in London, the Westbury, was an occasion of general news interest. It is the first big hotel to be built in the West End for a decade, and though it is by no means a large one by American standards it will be a help in meeting increasing demands for accommodation in the height of the tourist season.

The charges are high in our currency, but it will have no lack of support on that account, for it is one of a chain of hotels owned by The Knott Corporation of New York, who will be able to give it bountiful publicity in the United States and, if need be, in other countries.

Until the complex machinery of a new organisation has got into top gear it would be unwise to assess the part it is going to play in the life of the metropolis. The Westbury will have no large banqueting facilities until the additional wing has been built, but a Regency room is now available for small gatherings, whilst its restaurant and Polo Bar will doubtless become fashionable for entertaining.

The advent of a new hotel gives cause for reflection. What a tremendous amount of change there has been in the London hotel world in the last fifty years. Of hotel landmarks that have disappeared I recall, travelling westward from Fleet Street, Andertons, much frequented by newspaper men; The Cecil, in the Strand, the training ground of many a famous hotelier and restaurateur; that once coaching hostelry, The Golden Cross, almost opposite Charing Cross Station; and down Whitehall those great barracks of hotels, The Victoria and the Metropole. A further gap in available hotel accommodation came about when the Carlton, in Pall Mall, and The Langham, opposite the B.B.C., closed their doors.

Against these demises, however, there is the credit side to be recorded. What a news interest was created when the Strand Palace Hotel was opened with, if I remember rightly, a bed and breakfast price of 6s. 6d. a night and No Tips! Later followed the Regent Palace Hotel and The Cumberland, which provided a bathroom to every bedroom. (As a matter of interest, the first hotel in London to install a bathroom to every bedroom was The Goring, in Ebury Street, S.W.1.) In the West End I recall the building and opening of The Dorchester, Grosvenor House and The Park Lane, and on the site of The Junior Athenæum a block of service flats was built.

Apart from completely new edifices, hotel interests in London have displayed much enterprise in modernising. Only within the last year or two a complete metamorphosis has been effected at The Green Park Hotel, in Half Moon Street; the Washington, close by in Curzon Street, has been largely reconstructed inside; The Meurice, in Bury Street, St. James's, was delightfully redecorated and refurnished after bomb damage; the Mandeville, off Wigmore Street, has been given an entirely new look; the Kensington Palace Hotel has been largely rebuilt and enlarged, and the Gore Hotel, at the Queen's Gate end of Kensington Gore, is adding to its amenities and laurels with planned consistency.

Tourist travel to this country not only brings welcome foreign currency but new thoughts. Travelling around, I am often impressed with the intense desire of hotel executives to install anything that will be appreciated by their overseas patrons. Grosvenor House was one of the first hotels to fit an iced water tap in each bedroom, and recently I noticed that both the Mandeville and Gore Hotels provide iced water flagons. Every hotel is doing its best to provide more private bathrooms, but it is far less easy than it sounds, for apart from the difficulty of structural problems, there are the rules and regulations of local authorities.

My own impression, based on my personal knowledge of American hotels (and what American visitors tell me), is that while a private bathroom is almost a "must" with them, they can adapt themselves. What pleases them more than anything else is the room service they experience over here; to find the bedclothes turned back and their night clothes laid out is something they rarely experience in the States . . . and that is one reason for my wish to stay at the Westbury—to see if they have adopted the British or the American style of bedroom service!

While our hotels are preparing for the forthcoming tourist season the question arises whether we who are called on to entertain overseas visitors, have planned where we are going to take them. I am constantly being asked to suggest some place to run out to dinner "with a bit of atmosphere, but not too far out." The answer for the north side of London is, I suggest, The Cromwell at Stevenage or, a few miles further on, its sister hotel The Sun at Hitchin. Another attractive spot, where one can dine and wine well by candlelight, is The Noke, near St. Albans.

On the west side there is greater choice, but in each case, especially if it is a fine evening, it is as well to book your table ahead. So choose from one of the following—you cannot go wrong: The Old House Hotel, Windsor; the Hind's Head at Bray and, though further afield, an hotel which is always worth the journey is The Compleat Angler at Marlow.

Excursioning into Surrey, if your overseas friends display interest in the gastronomic arts, be sure to take them to Henri Bally's place—The White Lodge at Blindley Heath, on the London-Eastbourne road. Here they can have their fill of good food and wine.

For olde worlde surroundings The Whyte Harte at Bletchingley is always appreciated, and a pleasant discovery in good cooking can also be experienced at The Crown at Oxted, where restaurateur Conti has retired to. Then for a surprising discovery take them to that Inn of petiteness, The Withies at Compton, off the Guildford by-pass.

I shall be very pleased to answer inquiries regarding other areas if readers would care to write to me.

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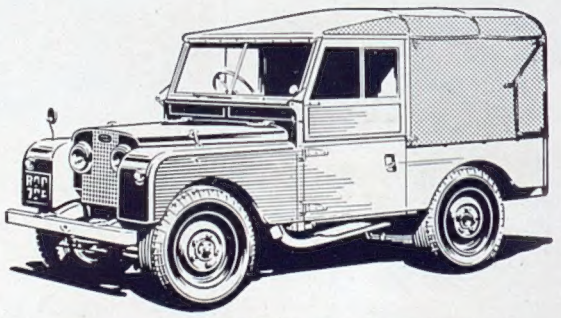

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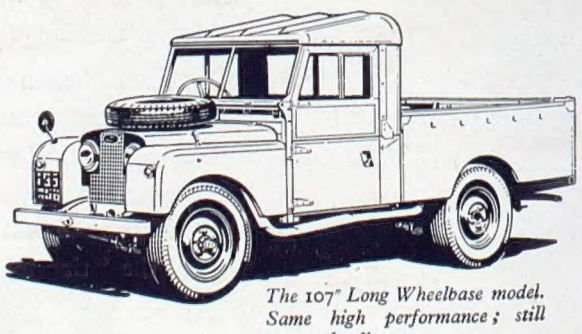

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